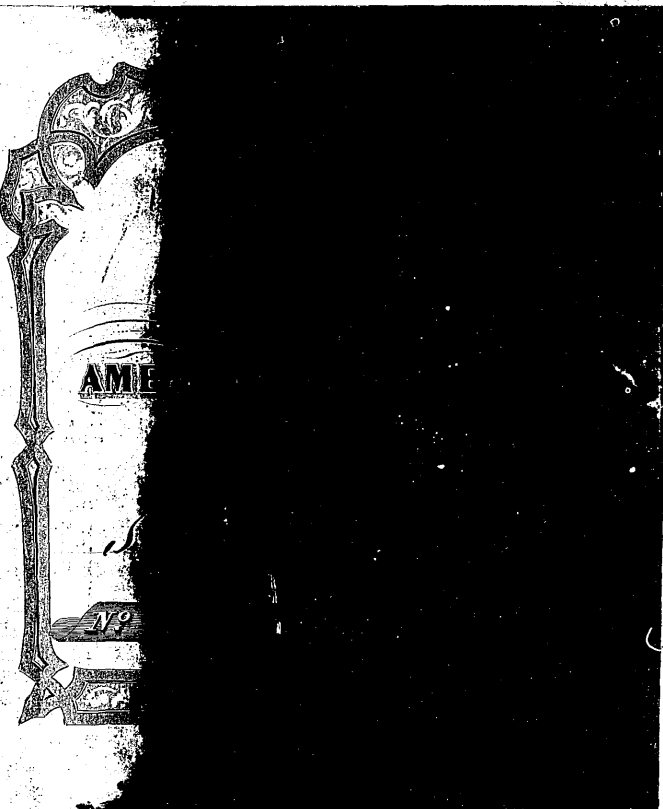


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of New York -
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POPERY IN ENGLAND:

BY THE

REV. C. STOVEL.



POPERY IN ENGLAND:

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE OF FIVE LECTURES,

DELIVERED IN

LITTLE PRESCOT STREET MEETING HOUSE,

BY THE

REV., *Charles* STOVEL,

ON THE

INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF POPERY IN ENGLAND.

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE following Lectures formed a part of the author's ordinary duty, but they derive a prominence, and point, from the attendance of certain Catholics in the congregation, who distributed a number of their Tracts at the Chapel doors, behaving, at the same time, with not quite so much modesty as on such occasions is to be desired. This produced the Fifth Lecture, which was not announced in the original advertisement. They are now printed, at the request of numerous friends who heard them, and witnessed the proceedings. My Catholic fellow-countrymen will, I hope, believe that this response to their activity is a result of, at least, a sincere desire for their good: for though we suffer from this foreign invasion, yet they, themselves, must be eventually the greatest sufferers. Hence, my most earnest prayer is for their recovery.

The Lectures relate to those injuries which Popery inflicts in England on the cultivation and enjoyment of personal godliness.

I. BY DISHONOURING THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

II. BY FORGING HER UNWRITTEN ORACLES.

III. BY CORRUPTING THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS.

IV. BY DEGRADING THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

V. BY THE DEMORALIZING POLICIES OF ROME.

The utmost brevity has been sought, in order to secure the easiest, and cheapest circulation of the argument.

LECTURE I.

THE EVILS OF POPERY IN ENGLAND ; AS THEY APPEAR IN
ITS DISHONOURING THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.—
JOHN vii. 17.

THE first thing which arrests our attention on reading these words, is, the coincidence between the Saviour's position and our own : and the clear application of his argument to the case before us. He came in the capacity of a teacher. His doctrine was treated as if it were a new thing. His appeal was constantly made to the Ancient Scriptures ; whose types, he was to verify, and whose prophecies he was to fulfil. The authority of these Scriptures was acknowledged also by his opponents : but, his claims to their obedience were refused by his adversaries, through their adherence to their traditions : and through their attachment to the tolerated customs of their own society. This, in few words, is the case, as it stood, between our Lord and the Scribes and Pharisees.

Such, also, is the case between us and the Church of

Rome ; with all who entertain her erroneous practices. As teachers we present the claims of that same Redeemer ; and, we appeal to the same oracles of Divine Inspiration. We ask obedience, not to ourselves, but to God. That which *we* receive, as his word, is acknowledged, by *them*, to be of Divine authority. But, the request is treated as a novelty ; and it is refused, as his was ; and, on the same grounds : the appeal of our adversaries to tradition, and their fixed attachment to the customs of *their* society.

The question, in both cases, is altogether one of truth and duty : and, the argument of our Lord, is, in both cases conclusive, as it is concise. My doctrine, saith the Redeemer, is not mine but God's. If you will but *do* what *he* commands you, the origin of this doctrine shall be quite plain to you. Whatever of mystery there may be about my words : none shall remain about your docile obedience. In discussions you may find difficulties ; but, the faithfulness of God, responding to your faithful practice of what is plain to you, shall remove them all. Let the whole, therefore, be reduced to an experiment of confidence and prayer, in the discharge of known duty ; and, then, experience shall remove all doubt of my Messiaship : the dignity of my character : the work of my atonement : and the Divine source of that authority which you see me exercise.

By this argument, the revelation of God, is raised to the same dignity with that, of all the laws of nature. If any man could doubt whether fire burns ; he may thrust his hand into it. If another suspect that proper food is not adapted to sustain life, let him eat it. And

if any doubt whether the Bible be the word of God : he must obey it on its own terms. Experience will then decide. Such was the case recorded in the Life of the Rev. John Newton, in this city. When entangled with Deistical doubts, finding the promise ; “ Ask and ye shall receive,” &c. ; he reduced all his proof to this syllogism. If this book be true, this text is true. If this text be true ; there is a God waiting to hear my prayer. I will try it, was his resolve : and, in directly approaching God, by this experiment, his doubts were exchanged for unwavering confidence, and for peace which continued to the close of life.

Observe too, the effect of this position. Our Lord finds an objector to his doctrine. When the truth has been intelligibly stated, he leads the doubting disciple at once to God. Whatever the promise, the prophecy, or the precept that requires support, the scorner is invited to draw his proof from a direct experiment of obedient faith in God. Thus the very first step leads him to God. The first act of his faith is an act of godliness. Every advance is an advance in godliness. Thus, the germ of that piety is produced, which all ordinances, sacraments, fellowship, and providential disciplines are intended to nourish and mature : I may add, the character which every saint is destined to retain in heaven : the character which is so essential to its joys, that without it, heaven itself would be nothing more than another hell.

Concern for this vital, and vitalizing godliness, has led me to announce this series of discourses. For Catholic Emancipation, and the yielding to that class of her Majesty's subjects, privileges in the State, equal

to those which we ourselves enjoy ; I am, and ever have been, a humble, indeed, but a most strenuous advocate. But while I yield to them in earthly things all that they can with any shadow of justice require ; compassion for their souls, as well as a sincere concern for those committed to my care, induces me to be the more decided in refuting those principles and positions, by which this large community are, directly, opposed to this vital godliness. For, without it, *the* never can be saved : and, while they occupy their present ground, there must be scattered over the three provinces of England, Scotland, and Ireland, not less than *nine millions* of individuals, who, by their religious principles, are, in all their activities, made decided and aggressive adversaries to the best interests of mankind ; while the doctrines they teach, are entertained by other communities, and thus become more dangerous. For these errors, taught by a Catholic, are like poisons administered by an enemy ; but the same errors taught by Protestants, are like poisons mingled in the chalice of a friend.

These errors, therefore, have been designated—"Popery in England,"—not because they are now held by Papists exclusively, but because they originated in that Church ; and, because, in the documents of that Church, these errors are most clearly stated and most strenuously defended. Hence, I shall use her authority in stating the points of dispute ; placing, by far, my greatest dependence on the Canons of the Council of Trent.

And first, Popery is opposed to personal godliness, by the very position which is assumed by the Church with respect to her disciples and their God.

She stands between the two, regulating their intercourse according to her own will. To this end, her disciples are reduced to a subjection, which is nothing less than absolute. One of her latest and living authors, repeating his own words, says—

“ I then observed,” that, “ it was impossible for any man to be brought to the Catholic religion, or to adhere to it on any principle whatever, without in the act of entering that religion, of becoming a member of it, embracing and identifying with his conscience, and conviction, the only essential, fundamental principle of Catholicity : that a man might be led a thousand ways to the city, but there was only one gate whereby he might enter ; and I stated, that no man was a Catholic until he had embraced the principle of the Catholic faith, which is, *submission to the teaching and authority of the church constituted by God.*”*

The last words are printed in italics by the author ; and they have a candour not always discoverable in writers of that class. The act of teaching, which all will allow to Christians, both as a privilege and a duty, is clearly associated by him with the exercise of *authority*. It is in the exercise of this *authority*, then, that we see the leading and fatal error of the Romish Church, for though, in some instances, her decrees may coincide *with* the Sacred Scriptures, there are other cases, in which she decrees *without* the Sacred Scriptures ; and there are others, again, in which she decrees *against* the Sacred Scriptures ; and, these are so serious, that supposing she ever had the authority she assumes, they would prove an infidelity to her trust, which would render all rational confidence in her dictates an absolute impossibility.

This argument, with its several bearings and results,

* Dr. Wiseman's Lectures on the Roman Catholic Church, p. 18.

it will be my duty to explain in the following exercises : the first illustration being derived from the dishonour which, in exercising this *authority*, she casts upon the word of God itself; for, to support her claim, she denies the existence of any adequate proof that the Sacred Scriptures are inspired, until, by her decree, these documents are invested with this dignity. Take it in the very words of the author just quoted :—

“ And thus it is, therefore, that the Catholic receives, upon the authority of the Church, these two important doctrines, the canonicity and inspiration (of the Sacred Scriptures), which I endeavoured to show you, at our last meeting, it would be almost, if not quite, impossible to each, by a course of ordinary logical reasoning.”

And again—

“ That authority does not merely confirm, but obliges us, or enforces, us by the power, that Christ has invested in it, to receive this sacred book.”

To illustrate and defend this statement, he says further—

“ When an ambassador presents himself before a sovereign, it is said, ‘ where are your credentials?’ He presents his credentials, and upon the strength of these very credentials, which he himself brings, he is acknowledged as the ambassador : so that he himself first presents the documents whereby his mission, and authority are, as it were, established.”

But who has invested the church with this authority ? It is answered—“ Christ.” How then do we know that Christ invested her with this authority ? The reply is, “ Upon the authority of Scripture.” But who attests the authority of the Scripture ? It is answered, the Church. So then the Church has her authority from Scripture : and the Scripture has its inspiration from the Church ; and the Church appears before us as

an ambassador for God ; claiming an absolute authority over our judgments and our hearts ; but, presenting no other credentials, than those which are signed by her own name. She appeals for her supreme power and infallibility to the Scripture, and yet she declares, *that the Scripture cannot be proved to be inspired without her own decree.*

Whatever may be said of the Romish Church, it is plain, from this, that her advocate is not infallible. He first leads us from Divine authority to human authority—and then he makes, the claim to this human authority, as absurd as possible. It is but just, however, to say, that he is not the inventor of this syllogistic circle. It was prepared by Vincenzo Lunello, and presented to the fathers in the Council of Trent. When named in their meeting, it was not without its advocates : but, the artifice was too *gross* for their adoption. In their conflict with the great reformers, this sophism would have served them as little as a cobweb spread over them in the face of a storm. One sarcasm of Luther's would have consumed it for ever. Nor would it have been right, on trivial grounds, to have even supposed, that an author, in this age, could have resuscitated a fable of such grotesque antiquity ; and resting on so frail a foundation. But, his second Lecture is so filled with reasonings that agree with the pages of an infidel ; and the conclusion at which he arrives is so directly to the point ; that, *without the decree of the Church, the inspiration of Scripture cannot be proved* ; as to render it impossible, for any amount of Christian charity, to rescue him from the consequences of its pernicious absurdity.

The point at which Mr. Wiseman stumbles, may be expressed in his own words. He can find historical proof that the books of Scripture were written by their several authors; but, he wants an authority by which it may be shown that they wrote them by actual inspiration. He cannot find that fact stated in Scripture.

“It is thus, therefore, that I want, to the external evidence of inspiration, that last link to which I have alluded.”*

He can understand from Scripture that Christ gave this Romish Church authority. to enrich these Scriptures themselves with the dignity of inspiration—though *it is not written*—but, he could never understand the words of Peter—“For the word of God came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” He can find the proof of the Church’s authority; but, he can find no proof of the Spirit’s authority. Let him, therefore, look at this suggestion of his Lord. “If any man will do his will, (that sent me,) he shall know of my doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”

By this appeal the Saviour satisfied himself respecting the Jews, because it placed before them a means of conviction that would render them without any excuse for their infidelity, and by the same appeal he will satisfy himself with respect to us. For, supposing a Bible found in a strange land, with no other advantage than the ability to read it, the heathen would be led to this experiment of faith by its very words. If he asked without receiving, or if he obeyed it without being

* Lecture II, p. 30. Wiseman.

blessed, he would have to seek out of his document where he had failed in fulfilling the terms of the promise, or of the command. If he succeed in this, he will want no syllogism to prove the truth of what he has experienced ; and, while this is wanting, no reasoning or external authority can supply its place. Before we can attain the highest certitude, of the nature of mercy, or of the practicability of its appropriation, being altogether a practical matter, it must be reduced to experience : for, whatever the highest in the Church may think, unless they taste, and handle of the word of life, they certainly must perish.

By this suggestion, our Lord reveals the object of his whole mission, and acts in accordance with it. He came that he might bring us *nigh to God*. Accordingly, his word invites the learner, at once, to a personal interview with God. If any doubt be entertained respecting the power of his redemption, it can be reduced, by every obedient spirit, from a matter of faith, to one of experience. An untaught peasant of my own acquaintance, when assailed by a reader of Voltaire's works, made use of this very resource : to the varied and artful objections of his adversary, he replied, " I am not sufficiently read to answer what you say : but it is not possible for me to regard the Bible as false, because it is the life of my soul, I live upon it every day. You might as well say, that my ordinary food is poison."

Here you may see the result of our Lord's suggestion. There must have been a time (I know there was a time) when, his faith in the word of God was not so strong. There was a time when, he trembled at the promise as

though it were too good to be true. But, he ventured the first act of obedience, and the second followed; these led to others, and in the path of *known* duty he found increasing light. The joy of the Lord, combined with unshaken faith, was his recompense. But, it was a recompense which resulted from that personal intercourse with God, to which he was thus introduced.

Here then, is "the link" required, to unite with every conscience, the external evidence that what the Bible contains came out from God; and not merely to the *conscience* of the learner; but, to his *confidence*; his peace, his unspeakable joy. It is a link which is clear; within the reach of every one; by a docile mind it can be always *riveted* in the place of devotion and duty; and it cannot be broken by any strain that nature's necessities can lay upon it: but it increases in strength by all that can transpire, until, by the last great conflict of faith, experience of the Divine truth is perfected, when mortality is swallowed up of life; and death, in victory.

It is on this principle of appealing to experiment, that all the system of revelation is constructed. By the Holy Spirit some new mystery of grace, is, unfolded through the instrumentality of a living man. The word appears to be the word of God, but still the highest proof of this is reserved for the obedient servant. He takes what he can understand, and by observing it, he goes from faith to faith. Every successive effort to understand, and to obey the truth, is still followed by fresh manifestations of Divine goodness. To illustrate this, many books of Scripture, are composed entirely of histories: in which are recorded, the results of human experience now ob-

tained in the practice of obedient faith in God's word, and then, acquired by its plausible neglect, or open violation. Hence, in the days of Josiah, we learn the cause of all the previous calamities of Israel, from the wonder and astonishment with which the books of the law were found in the rubbish of the sanctuary. Had these sacred books never been so neglected and thrown aside, it is quite certain that Israel would never have sunk into her gross idolatry, or felt, from its effects, her terrible afflictions. It is thus with individuals. We see the royal state of crowned infidelity, or idolatrous pollution, blasted by a Divine curse, and driven from the habitations of man : while the feeble, and untrained servants of the Lord, find from their obedience to his truth, a more than earthly support and joy, even in their furnace of fire. But all these results of faith are found, connected with a conscientious obedience to what they know to be the propounded will of God. There might be many things in the law of Moses, which the three children of Babylon did not understand, but they knew that God forbade their worshipping before an idol. They knew that they were commanded not to bow down to it : and, it was in yielding up their lives, rather than break this *known command*, that they obtained their miraculous testimony to the truth of inspiration. It is thus, that in all the Psalms we find the pilgrims of faith, now calling upon God out of the depths of affliction ; but afterwards, rising from their sorrowful baptisms, brightened with the smile of heaven. With the joy to which they are thus introduced, there is nothing, in all the productions of earth, that will bear to be brought into comparison. Nor is it merely that the joy thus gained, is both holy,

exalted, and substantial ; leaving no possibility of doubt behind, whether God has spoken to us or not : but it has a peculiar appropriateness to those times of grief in which the resources of nature fail, and leave us destitute. Moses, David, Jeremiah, and Daniel, with Paul, and the other apostles, found the results of obedient faith the richest, and most conclusive, in the time of their deepest sorrows. So that, in all their histories, the beams emitted by revelation, seem to shine with the greatest lustre, when spread upon the face of the darkest storm.

But in all the course of sacred history, it is found that these results of faith proceed from an actual approach to God, and an intelligent use of his word. The reason assigned for action is,—“The Lord hath spoken.” The reason urged by the prophet is,—“Thus saith the Lord.” The word which the Lord hath spoken, thus becomes a medium of intercourse between God and his individual servants. By its use he speaks to all its readers at the same time ; and, being always present, he verifies in all who obey it, his glorious faithfulness and power. Hence, proceeds the whole phenomena of experimental religion ; in which the individual truths of revelation, are, first studied, and then obeyed by individual minds. Their faith, and their religion thus become personal, sanctifying, and full of exaltation. Thus they draw nigh to God : and God draws nigh to them. They read his word, and then converse with God : and, by obeying what they thus discover of his will, they learn what is the fellowship of the mystery that was hid in God : by receiving from his fulness, and grace for grace. In all the business, and the sorrows of life, they thus attain communion with

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost and, however poor and feeble, and despised amongst men : by appropriating the unsearchable riches of Christ, they have strong consolation ; and, are filled with the fulness of Him, who filleth all in all.

And hence, the opposition made to this injunction of our Lord, is *merciless* as it is *absurd* ; and serves more, than any other fact, to explain the results of Popery wherever it has prevailed. The supposed deficiency of evidence is supplied by the link of Church authority : and the link of experience is rejected. In consequence of this, where prompt and actual obedience to God, is required ; they impose, an absolute submission to the Church. Then there is the difficulty of knowing who the Church is—some say the Congregation—others the Pope and Council—and others the Clergy in general. It is still more difficult to know what the Church enjoins : and the authority on which her power is raised. Hence, difficulty follows difficulty, as darkness thickens at the approach of night : until, the victim of its artifice, is compelled, either to resign all regard for truth in matters of religion—or else sinking into infidelity, to resign religion altogether—or, finally, he must reject as the greatest enemy to his soul, the Church, who could, with such cruel daring, thrust herself between, a forgiving God, and his offending people.

But beside this terrible impeachment of the sacred writers the Church of Rome has cast a still further dishonour on the Sacred Scriptures, when she charges them with obscurity. That one passage, in which Saint Peter admonishes us to be very careful in studying the Sacred Scriptures, has been misquoted to satiety, as a kind of

bug-bear, which should frighten us away from them altogether. In the Council of Trent, and by modern writers, it is pleaded, that these books are too mysterious for men of common sense to understand. In proof of this, multitudes of cases have been collected, in which the Scriptures have been used improperly, and misinterpreted. Father Sarpi has given a long catalogue, and many are stated in the Decree of the Council. These have also been artfully interwoven by Bossuet, in a work directed on that subject against the general use of Scripture. But, a careful perusal of the cases, will show to all, that these evils were found, not so much in the Protestant Churches, where the Scriptures were read : as in the Romish Church, where they were prohibited : and further, it is also plain that these evils resulted both in the Catholic Church and out of it ; not from the obscurity of God's holy word, but from those garbled, and shamefully unfaithful versions of Sacred Scripture, which the Church of Rome has issued in every nation where she could not conceal them altogether ; and, by which, she has established against herself the heaviest charge of infidelity both to God and man.

Nothing can be more demonstrative here than the Decrees of Trent relating to the Scriptures ; and the true reasons which swayed the Council. They forgot the terrible perversions, which are found in their own rituals, and affected to complain that those whom she condemned, had used the sacred pages improperly ; but the great and real conflict, with them, was, respecting an appeal to—the Hebrew and Greek texts. By some it was contended, that these, and only these, ought to be regarded as the word of God. It was the originals that

God inspired, and confirmed by miracles; and therefore, it was to these that the Church must conform. But this was rejected as *heresy*. They contended that the Church was infallible, and therefore that her versions must be received. They knew so little of the Hebrew and the Greek, that Cardinal Cajetan was obliged to have the original Scriptures read to him by an interpreter. It was thus he made his notes. Yet, in the plenitude of their ignorance, the fathers resolved that Scripture had been searched enough, and their appeal must now be made to the doctors of their schools. Against an appeal to the originals, they directed and maintained their fixed and constant opposition. They knew but little compared with what they should have known, but they knew enough to convince them, that an appeal to the originals, would be fatal to their claims. Multitudes of their superstitions would have disappeared, as the fanciful shapes of mist between their mountains melt and vanish in the opening day. These testaments, like two witnesses for God, would, if unbound in their assemblies, with all the force of Divine authority, testify against the mass of their religious observances. But, besides the effect which must have followed from the detailed application of these original Scriptures; their claim to the infallibility of their Church, must have fallen under such an appeal. Their Church had adopted the vulgate Latin version; and, to have admitted its inaccuracy, would have been to have relinquished her infallibility in her most solemn trust. They, therefore, rejected the originals; and retained their version; forming a committee to correct its printing. Here again there was a fraud; for they knew that its translation

was *bad* ; but rather than concede this, they resolved only to correct *its printing*. But even this was never done. The committee sat, but never could surmount its difficulty. The appeal to the originals, therefore, was forbidden—and the use of this imperfect version was imposed—but the true reasons for their decree they could not publish. They, therefore, withheld their real motives in this policy ; and assigned as their reason for restricting the use of Scripture, the fact, that these Scriptures *had* been misinterpreted, and improperly employed.

But, the worst misinterpretations of Sacred Scripture, that have ever been made, are chargeable, not on the common people ; but, on the doctors of the Church : and, not on the doctors of the Protestant : but on those of the Roman Catholic Church. Of this, we have the clearest proof, in the statements made by Cardinal Cajetan in the Council of Trent. He there assures us, that if the doctors of Rome had adhered to the Sacred Scriptures, the Lutheran heresy would never have existed. Sarpi Hist. Con. Trent. Book ii. p. 155.

That this must be the case, is plain from the rules included in the Decrees of Trent, which relate to the edition and the use of the sacred books. For not only was the vulgate version of Sacred Scripture, which was known and acknowledged in the Council, to have been incorrect, imposed on the people, and clergy, as the only scriptural rule of determining Christian doctrine : but, secondly,

“The Council further degrees,” “that in matters of faith and morals, and whatever relates to the maintenance of Christian doctrine, no one, confiding in his own judgment, shall dare to wrest the Sacred Scripture to his own sense of them, *contrary to that which hath been held and*

still is held by Holy Mother Church, whose right it is to judge of the true meaning and interpretation of sacred writ : or contrary to the unanimous consent of the fathers : even, though such interpretations should never be published. If any disobey, let him be denounced by the ordinaries, and punished according to law."

In the discussions on this Canon, the object of the Council was more plainly avowed. It was to secure a conformity of Scripture to the Church: and to prevent the necessity, in any age, of conforming the Church with her customs to the Scripture. Sarpi Hist. Con. Trent. Book ii.

That the same sentiment prevails in the Church now, is plain from the whole of its deportment. In the Catholic countries on the Continent: the Bible Society, is opposed in every direction, though they circulate versions which have been prepared by Catholics, because they have no notes, or commentaries. In English, we have two Catholic versions, and the price of each, is a virtual prohibition of their study. The Rhemists translation, will be best studied, in Thomas Cartwright's notes upon it: for the treacheries which are revealed by him there, are sufficient to involve its authors in eternal shame. The Douay Bible requires only a glance to discover the same pernicious intention to confirm the statements of the spirit, to the practices of their party.

My beloved brethren, it is plain from all the records of history, that every attempt made by this Church to circulate the Sacred Scriptures, has only been an apology for their numerous and guilty efforts to corrupt and to suppress them: and it is as plain from these very apologies, wrung from them by the rebukes of better examples, that this corruption and suppression of Scrip-

ture, is a practice which they are unable to defend. Here, the good amongst them, must know that they are wrong. But I have one other case to submit, in which the dishonour of Sacred Scriptures involves the very clearest proof of infidelity.

The Council of Trent must be regarded as a body of men entrusted by their constituents with an important duty. One part of that duty was *the fixing of the sacred Canon*; or the determining what books are to be regarded as divinely inspired. Now no duty could be more important than this, and no men had, at that time, a better opportunity of performing it. They were therefore bound before God and men to discharge it to the best of their judgment. How then did they act? Why they not only adopted all the Apocryphal books as inspired, which was generally, and most deservedly disputed, but they went further, they adopted the book of Baruch as part of the Prophecies of Jeremiah, when all, or nearly all the fathers present, agreed that *it was not inspired*: and they did it, not because they had any doubt of the fact, but because it was included in the services of their Church; and it would implicate her infallibility to give it up. On this most gross and wilful violation of their trust, I shall only say that it buries their claim to infallibility beneath the guilt of their unfaithfulness.

In all their discussions, nothing could be more clear than the contempt with which Scripture was treated in the Council of Trent; it was likely, therefore, that they should wish to keep the Sacred Scriptures from the people. The result of their perusal had been felt in Germany: and, in France, their own conduct was, by

their own brethren, rebuked in the sarcastical declaration, that, the Council of Trent was much superior to the apostles: for, they were subject to the Spirit, but the Council would submit to nothing.

Infidelity in man is always serious, whatever the affair in which it is committed; but here it is invested with a rashness, and a cruelty, which claim for themselves the severest reprehension. No other crime can ever bear a competition in guiltiness with this. For what, my brethren, are the documents on which this artifice has been expended? Are they not the two testaments by which we claim, and hold, the whole inheritance of mercy? They are the two witnesses to Divine compassion sent forth to testify to a dying world, that God is waiting to be gracious. Through these, we become acquainted with our Lord and our God; by these, the nature and use of his atonement are explained; on these pages all his promises are written; here the beam of prophecy describes for us the New Jerusalem, and the precepts of our Father, guide us to his blessed home—Dear fountain of eternal truth,—what should we do in this dark world without thee? When this page is sealed against us, all our hopes must expire for ever; and we, like benighted pilgrims in a forest, must wander without a guide; fall without a helper; and die without any one to save.

But, in conclusion, let us be careful, my brethren, lest our censure rest too exclusively on those who have been so mournfully wrong. They have assumed an authority which cannot be sustained. They have, to support this authority, impeached the credit of the sacred oracles. They deny that the revelations of God are brought

by the words of the Spirit within the capacities of men. They thus impeach his work of inspiration, and invalidate the documents of grace. They have dared to seal the sacred pages ; and when the seal had been removed without their will, they have corrupted the very words of the Spirit, and they have pronounced that man accursed who shall correct their errors. In all these things, they have done wickedly ; but have we been altogether pure from their sin ? Are there none of us, who shrink from the revelations of truth as the wicked shun the light ? Are there no Protestants who would shrink from the light of an uncorrupted version of the word of God ? Or are there no habits in our minds which require to be protected by partial constructions of his truth ? Oh, my brethren, let us lay these things to heart ; for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, must cleanse us from many sins before we shall walk in the light, as he is in light, with free, and unmingled felicity.

And further, suffer me to suggest the inquiry, whether our feelings have been just what they should be with reference to this portion of our fellow-men ? We have been full of ardour for the heathen ; but papal nations, and the papal inhabitants of our own land, have been by far too much neglected. Have we not regarded their state with too much political feeling ; while that emotion of pity which accords with the Gospel, and the practice of our Lord, has been too little cultivated ? Is there not in the very terms with which we depreciate their activity something which proves the want of more Christian zeal, and compassion, towards them in ourselves ? If they have assumed the attitude of aggression, it must be because we have been too indifferent. Let

their zeal and prudence, therefore, in what is wrong, render you increasingly devoted, and prudent, in seeking to recover them from the gates of death.

But, perhaps, I am addressing those who have even yet, never valued the word of God's salvation; or fled for refuge to the hope set before you in the Gospel. If it be so, let me entreat you, my beloved, not to trifle with your own souls. You agree with me in censuring those who hide from us the word of life; in this you may be right; but be ye certainly assured, that if with the Bible in your hand, you live in the neglect of its precepts and promises, your Protestantism will leave you without hope; and the Papist himself will rise up in judgment against you. Oh, what will be the advantage of your covenants of mercy, when you have never read them, or pleaded them at the throne of grace? Consider, I beseech you, what I say—for that word which invites you to a full salvation, will, eventually, consign the indifferent, and unbelieving, to a ruin that is irreversible.

Nor can you complain against your judgment: for, whatever the bitterness of its results, it is deserved by the motive which rules your heart. Let your own conscience itself decide this point, and take the case before you as an example. Say to your own soul, can anything but what is evil make me dread, or undervalue the book of God? For, why did the fathers of Trent say that license (liberty) in the use of Scripture was worse than tyranny? and therefore, that, leaving these most sacred oracles, they should appeal to the authority of the Church? Vincenzo Lunello replied—" *It is not possible to convince the Lutherans otherwise.*" But, why could

they not convince the Lutherans by Holy Scripture? Cardinal Cajetan replies—" *If the Doctors of Rome had adhered to the Scriptures in their true sense, the Lutheran heresy would never have found place.* The reason, therefore, was confessed: the Scriptures were against the Papists, and in favour of the Lutherans; the Council could not appeal to Scripture without being condemned. Hence, Richard Mans, when pleading for the restraint of Scripture, and the study of Aristotle, affirmed, that Scripture had been searched enough, and it ought to be prohibited to every one who has not been confirmed in school divinity; "*neither do the Lutherans gain upon any, but those that study the Scriptures.*" They felt, moreover, that their use of this Divine word was contrary to the sense of the ancient fathers, and to defend them from this fact, Cardinal Cusanus said, "that the understanding of the Scripture must be fitted to the time, and expounded according to the current rites: and that it is not to be marvelled at, if the Church *in one time, expoundeth in one fashion; and at another, in another.*" Thus, they rejected the Scriptures because they were in every possible way condemned *by the Scripture.* And you, my beloved, can never turn from this holy fountain of truth eternal, but from a guilty cause: "if any man love darkness rather than light, it is *because his deeds are evil.*"

Be not you, therefore, I entreat you, partakers of their sin; but, listening to the word of your God, and studying its import, "walk in the light, as he is in the light; and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, shall cleanse you from all sin."

LECTURE II.

ON THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF POPERY IN ENGLAND AS
THEY ARE TRACEABLE TO ITS ASSUMPTION
OF UNWRITTEN ORACLES.

And (Jesus) answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your tradition, &c.—MATT. XV. 3—9.

It was stated to you, in my last discourse, that the Church of Rome was opposed to vital godliness, by *the very position she assumes*; placing herself between God and man; authorising, or pretending to authorise, his communications of mercy to his servants, modifying the sense of these communications: and, regulating the use of them amongst her disciples. It was also stated, that of those disciples, she required the most abject submission to this supreme authority.

Lest it should appear that this has been overstated you will allow me to read, a short passage, from one of their books, which I found in extensive circulation through Ireland. It is entitled, “Hell Opened;” and embellished with wood-cuts, which are said to be descriptive of its torments. At the close of the book we find, “A short preparation for death.” In this, four

kinds of temptation are defined, with directions for overcoming them. The first class of these are, temptations against faith. Against these, the dying disciple is exhorted. First,

“Be sure not to enter into any dispute with him : let it suffice to say to him, with holy indignation, begone, Satan, father of lies, I will not hear thee ; my belief is no other than that of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.”

Secondly,

“Be likewise on your guard against any thoughts which may offer themselves as conducing to strengthen your faith ; reject them as suggestions of the devil,” “listen not to his arguments, not even to those passages of Scripture, he may possibly allege. For, however, clear and direct they may seem, yet he will certainly misapply them, maim, or quote them wrong.”

Again,

“If the fiend should ask you what the Church believes ;” “content yourself with making one general act of faith ; or, if you would mortify him still more, answer that the Church believes the truth ; if he press to know what is the truth, tell him it is what the Church believes. Take especial care that your heart be inseparable from the cross, and say to the Son of God, my Creator and Redeemer ! come immediately to my assistance, and depart not from me, lest I wander from the truth thou hast taught me ; and since thou hast favoured me with being a member of thy Church, let me die so to thy greater glory.”

The reference to our Redeemer will be best understood when we have considered the doctrine of Transubstantiation—the Mass—and the use of the Crucifix. But let the effect of these upon the worshipper be whatever they may, it is plain from these words, that the help of the Redeemer is requested, not as a means of approaching God, but to assist the disciple, in adhering to the Church ; that he may die submitting to her directions. This,

then, gives to this demand of the Church of Rome, not only all the clearness of an open avowal, but all the solemnity of sacred admonition, administered at the hour of death.

How this authority is used, when men have submitted to the Church of Rome, has been seen from her treatment of Sacred Scripture; but this may be added on that particular; when she has dared to issue the sacred writings in her own name; to put her own construction on the *sense* of these sacred writings, and to regulate their circulation and study; it is no longer God who speaks to us through these Sacred Scriptures, but the Church; and they are no longer the word of God, but the mangled ruins of that word, issued as the Church is pleased to tolerate them; and thus, the commandment of God is made of none effect by her traditions.

I say, by her traditions, for the case before us exactly coincides with that of the ancient Pharisees. In opposing the claim, which our Lord rested on the ancient Scriptures, they appealed to their traditions, or *oral law*. By this, they sustained all their corruptions of the written law of God. When brought into juxtaposition, these two authorities were so opposed, that the one had the effect of annihilating the other. Such exactly is the case here. Appealing to an unwritten law, the Church of Rome, has ventured to enforce both doctrines and practices, not only such as are without all support in Sacred Scripture, but such also, as are absolutely *against* the Sacred Scriptures: and in such

cases, she openly reclines on a mass of what she calls unwritten declarations of the Divine will. I shall, therefore, endeavour

I. To verify the fact of this assumption.

II. To show the nature of the oracles assumed.

III. To exhibit the evils which result from their assumption.

By these (I think), you will be led to the conclusion, that, in thus assuming the use of these unwritten oracles, the Church of Rome has aimed a mortal thrust at Divine truth in its most important interests; and inflicted an additional injury on personal godliness, wherever the influence of her assumptions has extended.

I. Then to verify the fact of this assumption, we have only to read you the words of four unquestionable authorities.

First, In the declaration of the Catholic Bishops, which is drawn up with the utmost caution, as if to conceal this fact; we have at p. 7, sect. iii.

“Whereas the Catholic Church venerates the Holy Scriptures as the written part of the word of God.”

Observe, only as “*The written part of the word of God.*” In the tract entitled, “The True Principles of a Catholic,” written by Richard Challoner, we have the following, p. 2, sect. iii.

“And if we also receive unwritten traditions, as part of the word of God, we mean no other traditions but such as are Divine, and which we believe to be Divine, by the same authority by which we believe the Scriptures.”

You will observe the last expression “*we believe them to be Divine by the same authority by which we believe*

the Scriptures :" to be Divine—so that, this Church has, first, declared the inspiration of Sacred Scripture ; and then she has declared the inspiration of her unwritten oracles ; these two are called the credentials of her embassy : and when her decrees are not sustained by her *written* credentials ; she relies upon the *unwritten* credentials ; and both are presented as Divine, by *her own authority*.

Dr. Wiseman, who has laboured to give this point the greatest possible plausibility : has in his second lecture. at page 43, the following sentence :—

" This, therefore, at once accounts for what we mean by the *unwritten* word of God. We mean a body of doctrines, which we believe not to have been committed to writing, but to have been delivered by Christ to his apostles, and by his apostles to their successors."

Again,—

" Tradition, and the unwritten word, are one and the same thing."

As it is my object, now, merely to determine the matter of fact, that unwritten oracles are assumed : I shall pass over all explanations ; and, merely present to you one other authority. It is the Council of Trent, to which, all appeal is now made by the Church of Rome. In the year 1546, A.D., the fathers passed what has since been called the Decree of the Carnival. It is stated by Sarpi in the following words, book ii :—

" All the divines having made an end of speaking the eighth day, a congregation was intimated for the next, though it was no ordinary day, not so much to establish quickly a decree on the disputed articles ; as, for a grace of the Council, that on that day, dedicated to a profane feast of the

Carnival, the fathers should busy themselves in the affairs of the Council. And then it was approved by all, *that the traditions should be received, as of equal authority with the Scriptures.*"

Here, then, is the fact. In my last Lecture, I showed you, that they decreed the Apocryphal books, to be of inspired authority. They took the book of Baruch, which they acknowledged to have no support to this claim, and enforced its reception on the Church, as a part of the Prophecies, of Jeremiah : and now, you see, this same Church, in this its solemn meeting, giving, to these traditions, an authority which is equal to that of Sacred Scripture.

II. Let us now consider, therefore, what these traditions are.

In prosecuting this inquiry, we have one, very great difficulty to surmount. Whenever any fact is introduced of a character that deserves condemnation : it ordinarily meets with a flat contradiction from the advocates of this Church. They will, on principle, admit nothing which is not supported by the clearest papal authority ; and when it is opposed to their purpose, they treat even *this*, with a most astonishing freedom. To hold them up to any one declared position, is, like the struggle of Hercules with the fabled *Prôteus*. As often as you assail them in one form they take another ; and everything advanced in ordinary history, is rejected with a charge of positive falsehood. In every dispute, therefore, there is much here, both to be overcome, and to be endured. But, on this particular point, there is such a diversity of statement, that we hardly know where to turn for anything that approaches to uniformity.

Nor can I help observing, that, this very fact, supplies an incontrovertible proof, that like the will of Cæsar, which was pleaded by Anthony, in his murderous proscriptions, these unwritten oracles have no existence. In most cases the reference is made, either to the Latin or Greek fathers: but, if the references be traced to their source, they generally prove, as directly opposed to the claims of this Romish Church, as the Scriptures do themselves.

A proof of the difficulty I now state, may be educed from Dr. Wiseman's own words. In Lect. II. p. 43, he says:—

“We believe that no new doctrine can be introduced into the Church; that, if it can be shown, that any of these doctrines are not traceable to the times of the apostles, they can have no foundation.”

If this then be adopted, as our rule, it will sweep away, as with a besom of destruction, all the errors to which we are opposed. The doctrine of the Pope's supremacy, cannot be traced back so far as to the Council of Trent; for there it was rejected. A Canon for declaring it was proposed, but it was thrown out. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, cannot be traced further back, than to the ninth century; for, then, Ratramn, and Johannes Scotus, were appointed to draw up the evidence of this doctrine; and, the work of the former is so obscure, that no one can understand it; while the latter, is known to have affirmed, that the elements of the sacrament are only the signs of the body and blood of our Lord. Thus, we might trace the errors of Rome, severally, to their modern origin; and, when by the rule of our opponent, each had been cast away; the ancient, holy, apostolical

Church, would rise like a temple of diamond, emerging from an ocean of mud ; bearing, indeed, the marks of its many adversities ; yet still retaining the simplicity of its outlines ; the beauty of its ornaments ; and the proof of its imperishable nature.

How then may we determine what these unwritten oracles are ? I answer, there are three sources of information, which ought, at least, never to be contradicted by our opponents. First, the books employed by their Church in the instruction of the young, and the common people ; secondly, the several bulls and indulgences of their Popes ; and, thirdly, the Canons of the Council of Trent : for, if these be rejected, all confidence in her claim to infallibility, must be, *for ever resigned*.

With respect to books used in teaching the common people and children, every one will see, that nothing ought to be inserted there, which the Church is not prepared to acknowledge, and sustain by her authority ; for, this would involve the most cruel violation of faith, with those who are most dependent, and most confiding. I must, therefore, be allowed to appeal to them, in the confidence, that I shall not be contradicted.

In these, then, we have traditions relating to matters of fact, and points of duty.

Of those which relate to matters of fact, we may name the legends of the saints, which fill the Catechism of feasts and fasts. It is there said, that there are no reptiles in Ireland, because St. Patrick blessed that country with exemption from their annoyance. The services and duties imposed on the festival of the Virgin, and all the other saints, are supported only by tradition,

if sustained at all. The following, from page 15, of "Hell Opened," is not the most exceptionable of these traditions:—

"The devil appearing one day to St. Martin, with purple robes and a crown on his head. *Adore me*, said he, *because I am Christ, and I deserve it*; but the saint, assisted by a celestial light, answered him, saying, *my Lord is crowned with thorns and covered with blood, I know him not in this new dress*. The devil being discovered, fled away, but left so great a stench behind him, that this alone was sufficient for the saint to discover him."

This is assumed as the basis of an argument, which is to prove that there is a *stench* in hell.

To these may be added, the legends which occur to us in every department of topical history. At least, through all Christendom, it is scarcely possible to trace the history of any town, or church, or monastery, without finding some extraordinary tale of a saint, or of a devil, through whose favourable or injurious influences, the place was brought into notoriety. The legend of St. Dunstan, the titular saint of Stepney Church is an instance of this. His likeness is even now seen, described on ancient documents, holding the devil by his nose with a pair of tongs. Every part of our country abounds with such traditionary tales. Such, too, are those which relate to the finding of the true cross: that St. Helen found it in the year 326: that she went to Jerusalem to seek it; that she regarded it as a relic that deserved her pains in seeking it, and her veneration in case she found it; that she and the ancient Christians honoured it with other relics, as *they honoured the books of Scripture*: and that, the cross was used successfully against the molestations of evil spirits. To this, I may add, the deductions of

matters, stated as facts, and founded on the history, or supposed history of persons, whose names are mentioned in Sacred Scripture, such as—

“That the intercession of St. Joseph, must certainly be much available towards our reconciliation with God: and to render Christ effectually a Jesus or Saviour to us.”

And this again:—

“That as Jesus is the second Adam, so is Mary the second Eve: that is to say, the true mother of all living.”

Of all these, and multitudes of statements like these, we may safely say: that, if the Church of Rome does not hold them to be true; she is guilty of the grossest deception in placing them in her Catechisms, for the instruction of her children; and further, that if she does regard them as true, it can be on no authority given to these absurdities in Sacred Scripture, nor on any evidence derived from the ordinary study of history; they must, therefore, be parts of her unwritten oracles: for, the traditions of the Church alone, could sustain the temerity required in making such affirmations.

Of those which relate to particular duties, we may mention the Six Commands of the Church. There are Eight in the Catechism of Dr. Reilly.

- I. Sundays and Holy Days, mass thou shalt hear,
- II. And Holy Days sanctify through all the year;
- III. Lent, Easter Days, and Vigils thou shalt fast,
- IV. Fridays and Saturdays, flesh thou shalt not taste;
- V. In Lent and Advent, nuptial feasts forbear,
- VI. Confess your sins at least once every year;
- VII. *Receive your God about great Easter Day,*
- VIII. And to his Church neglect not dues to pay.”

These, you will observe, are given in addition to the Ten Commandments of God, and as of equal force: I

do not now speak of their propriety, but merely say, that whatever is contained in these Eight Commands of the Church, which is not contained in the Ten Commandments of God, must be included under the term tradition; and, *form a part of the unwritten law.*

It is not my wish, to introduce anything that might seem to be ludicrous; or, that is merely adapted to degrade: but, it is my duty to say, that, all those peculiar services which are imposed by the Church of Rome on her votaries; or, to which they are encouraged by her promises; such as, the honouring of relics: the supplication of saints: bodily inflictions for the purposes of penance: pilgrimages to the Holy Land; to sacred places: and for religious purposes: the wars of the cross, we call them crusades: which were waged, for their religion, against the heretics: the imposition of tortures on those who were supposed to be misled; as those which give its celebrity to the inquisition: together with those formalities which are observed both in administering, and in receiving the sacraments of the Church; such as, the cross, and the salt, &c., used in baptism: the formalities of confession, confirmation, ordination, marriage, extreme unction, and the mass: all these services, some, imposed on the priesthood, and others, on the people; as far as they are not found in the Sacred Scriptures must be maintained, and enforced, on the authority of that oral or unwritten law, to which, as to her chief and only refuge, when oppressed with the light of revelation, the Church of Rome is always obliged to retire.

The ceremony of the mass, alone, would require all

the consideration that could be given to it in one discourse : and if I be spared, before the winter conclude, I shall, with God's permission, return to that theme. I shall merely state now, therefore, that it contains a model of the ancient Greek Theatre. In Athens, a tragedy was performed, with one scene, which stood unaltered through all the play. The actors, moved amongst the objects on the stage, as the officiating priests, appear amongst the figures about the altar at the mass. The singers supply the place of the ancient chorus. The choir, of the Church, or, that part of the Church, where the ceremony is performed, especially in their Cathedrals, is, as nearly as possible, a model of the stage in a Grecian Theatre: the tragedy performed, or supposed to be performed, is the crucifixion of our Lord. Now all that I have to say here, at present, is, that this transfer of profane ceremonies, from a theatre of the heathen, to the house of God: together with the declaration that the mass is a real sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour: is neither supported by reason, or by Sacred Scripture; but rests entirely, *on those unwritten oracles of which we speak.*

Once more. In the Council of Tr  nt, the appeal to these traditions was made without any reluctance or concealment: and to these, the greater part of their Canons must be referred, as to their sole authority; of these, I may mention those which relate to the Divine sacraments; and those which relate to the priesthood. In each of which, it will be seen, that many things are both affirmed and enforced, which, are not only without any support in Scripture; but, which, are most directly

opposed to the Sacred Scriptures. But, as these are announced as the subjects of succeeding Lectures, you will excuse my enlarging on them now.

The only case I shall trouble you with further, is, that of employing images in worship. It will be unnecessary for me to inform, a careful reader of his Bible, that nothing can be found there, to sustain this practice in Christian worship. And, since the effect produced on the mind, by looking on images, is essentially different, from that which results from a contemplation of the invisible God: neither reason, nor Revelation, can yield it any support. That it arose in the Church at a date comparatively modern, is also manifest from all history. So dreadfully was the Church divided on this question, that the contest threatened, for a time, the breaking up of all society. It raged in the eighth century, with more cruelty and bloodshed, than generally afflict the seats of civil war: and, it eventually rent asunder, the eastern, from the western empire. In the earliest ages of the Church, the abhorrence of idol worship, was kept alive by the presence of heathen temples and sacrifices. Before these false deities, the faithful, were exposed to martyrdom every day; and in every province of the Roman empire. But, in the ages of which I now speak, the same abhorrence was provoked by the grossness and mercenary spirit, with which the Bishops of Rome, and the clergy who followed them, had mingled these abominations with the rites of Christianity; to please an untaught multitude; who, still remained, though wearing the Christian name, infected with the worst vices of idolatry. This practice, therefore, with

all its direful consequences, must, with those I have just mentioned, repose entirely, *on these unwritten oracles of Rome.*

If it be asked, where these oracles are? the answer is, in the Church. If you ask, where this Church keeps them? In what library? And who are these particular depositories, that we may consult them? to these questions, our deponents make no reply. They will refer to the ancient fathers; but the fathers reply, these oracles are not with us. They will refer to the Councils of the Church: but these reply, you cannot find them here. If you descend to particulars, and ask where are the oracles that sustain, the ceremony of the mass: the doctrine of the sacraments: the supremacy of the Pope: or the use of images: or extreme unction: or the doctrine of purgatory: or any one of those rejected peculiarities of the Church of Rome? If you press the inquiry, and follow their own references through all the documents of antiquity, you will find that, when you have pioneered your way through the grossness of a few dark ages: the Christian writers stand directly *opposed* to these peculiar claims of the Roman hierarchy. To seek for these unwritten oracles, therefore, is like searching for the philosopher's stone, which turns, whatsoever it touches, into gold.

The whole of this argument will be more clear from one example. When it is asked, where unbaptized children go after death? the answer is—they do not go to heaven, they do not go into purgatory. But where do they go? Answer—the Church has not decided. Hence, then, where any question arises that involves an appeal

to these oracles, the appeal must be made to what the Church has decided. Let it be further asked then, What has the Church decided respecting the supremacy of the Pope? The answer now made, is just a statement of the doctrine delivered by Bellarmine in the College of Rome, "Fourteen years after the Council of Trent." But then it might be inquired, is all that Bellarmine delivered to be received as the condensed doctrine of these *unwritten oracles*? The answer is, no, Bellarmine was an *individual*; and, he must teach only the decisions of the Church. Well—where does the Church make her decisions? The answer is—*In her Councils*. Let this, then, be the rule—and we inquire—What have the Councils determined respecting the supremacy of the Pope? and, Mr. Wiseman adds, whatever cannot be traced back to the apostles, can have no authority, for no new doctrine can be introduced to the Church. Be it so—then—And what was the decision of the Council of Trent, respecting the supremacy of the Pope? It is answered, there was no *decision* recorded on the subject in that Council. But then, I must inquire, was it proposed? The reply is—yes, it was, and it was rejected. But still, it is said, *the Pope did not agree to this*, and therefore, the Council without the Pope is not decisive. We must go still farther back. Well then, we will go back to Gregory the Great, who sent over into England, in A.D. 596, forty monks, over whom, St. Austin, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, presided. When the Anglican Church had greatly increased; and many difficulties were felt in conducting it; writing to Rome for instructions, Austin asks,—

“ Since the faith ought to be one, and uniform, why are the customs of Churches diverse ; and one kind of masses is used in the Holy Roman Church, and another in the Churches of Germany ? ”

Gregory replied to this,

“ Thy fraternity regards the customs observed in Rome, where it was nourished, although it holds thee in high esteem. But it is my wish that, whether in the Roman, or the Church of the Germans, or in any other Church, you may find anything by which it may be possible to please the omnipotent God more perfectly : you should collect in the Church of England, which is, yet, but newly devoted to the faith. You should chose with care, and you may be able from many Churches to pour improvements into the institution. For a custom is not to be chosen for the place in which it is used ; but the places are to be loved for their valuable institutions. In every single Church, therefore, choose the things that are pious, and religious, as far as they are right ; and these, as if collected in bundles, reduce to customs in the minds of the English, or, with the consent of the English.”

I scarcely know if I have the exact sense of his barbarous Latin, but certainly there is nothing in this to confirm the supremacy of the Pope in matters of faith, and religious worship. And to find something more positive on the subject, we must go still farther back to the Nicene Council. By the fathers then assembled, in the time of Constantine, the following decree was passed :—

“ Since an ancient custom has prevailed, and by an old tradition, that honour should be yielded to the Bishop of Jerusalem, let him have it, therefore ; an appropriate honour remaining, nevertheless, to the metropolitan of the state.”

Thus, therefore, the highest honour then yielded by the universal Church and clergy to man, was given, not to the Bishop of Rome, but to that of Jerusalem. Where, then, in all this line of investigation, do we find

the supremacy of the Pope? Why, *it is lost in the unwritten oracles of Rome.*

I wish to make you understand, my brethren, the precise nature of this subterfuge. But I have also, seriously to remark here, that, when an individual claims my entire subjection to him, both in the exercise of my judgment, the actions of my life, and in the feelings of my heart; I expect that he will, with manly openness, and without any prevarication, show me the document on which his claim is rested. But, since this cannot be, using this very brief and imperfect outline of the claims which are founded on these unwritten oracles; allow me in the last place to define,

The evils which result from their assumption and use. And first of all, the Church is led to demand, of all her disciples, faith, in the most important truths, and, in the greatest absurdities, at the same time. For in the words already quoted,

“If we also receive unwritten traditions as part of the word of God, we mean no other traditions but such as are Divine, and which we believe to be Divine by the same authority by which we believe the Scriptures.”

Hence, therefore, if you take all those things I have just mentioned; the tales of ancient saints; the legends of particular places; the worship enjoined in the place of relics; the ceremonies of worship; the indulgences; the crusades; the decrees and acts of the inquisition: if all be placed together, stated, not in my language, but in that of the authoritative documents of the highest papal court; if these, I say, be on one side, and the Holy Scriptures on the other; although there be in one, a

huge mass of undefinable mystery, a chaos of all that is absurd ; and in the other, the sweet, clear, beauteous pages, which describe our great redemption : yet, every disciple of the Catholic faith is compelled, on entering that Church, to receive them both, *with the same confidence*, and to act upon them both, as of *equal and Divine authority*.

This is awful, and may well explain the prevalence of infidelity in every nation where Catholicism has yet prevailed. Nor does it at all assist our opponents to affirm, that the errors belong to individuals, but not to the Church : for, the things which I have stated are maintained by the highest authority in that community. If you cast away all the supposed relics, there are enough of those which have been *confirmed* by the *Bulls* of the *Popes*, and by their special indulgences, to clothe their religious frauds in horrible sublimity. If all the true thorns of the Redeemer's crown could be collected, to which the Papal attestation has been given, they would seem to have exceeded the production of a forest. And when they have been heaped before us, is it not monstrous, that every disciple must believe as truly that each one was worn on the head of Jesus, as he does that Jesus died ? I should like to examine these thorns, and see if they were all of the same kind. If all the pieces of the true cross were collected, I mean, if all that have been authenticated by the court of Rome, to be pieces of the true cross, if these were collected together, it is said, by some, that they would yield a sufficiency of timber to build a ship of war ; and yet, since these are all declared to be so, it must be believed, as truly,

as that he who died upon it has redeemed our souls from death. The grossness of these absurdities provoked, in his better days, the reprehension of Erasmus, the most learned advocate that Rome has ever had ; and the pages of Italian poets have abounded with their rebukes. What then can be the effect of such an imposition, but the utter annihilation of thoughtfulness in piety ; or, the creating of an abhorrence of godliness altogether ?

The force of this conclusion will be more powerfully felt by one illustration. A man entering a court on a *Nisi Prius* case, demanded the inheritance of an estate. The first legal instrument he presented did not fully substantiate his claim. When this fact was intimated, he replied, I know it, but I have another that will. By submitting both these deeds to the examination of the court, he gained his cause. Such, then, is the case between us and Rome. She claims absolute submission to her authority ; and she appeals to Scripture. We have examined this, and it will not substantiate her claim. She replies, I know it ; but I have another deed that will, I have tradition. Well, we say, will you let us have the tradition, that we may examine it, and compare it with Scripture ? No, she replies, by no means, the moment you begin to examine, you begin to sin : you must simply take my word : and examine *neither*. If such a method were adopted in the earthly court the claim would certainly be refused ; and such, I pray, may be the fate of every demand, made by this hierarchy, to so grievous and unreasonable a subjugation.

Let me add one further evil which results from this

assumption of unwritten oracles. When they are admitted, we have revelation, opposed to revelation; and with such direct and awful violence, that, every inquirer becomes baffled and confounded in the search for truth: so that, if he be not prepared to distinguish between the claims of Scripture, and these unwritten oracles: he must either relinquish all regard for truth in his religion, or else be plunged into infidelity. One case will be sufficient to illustrate this. I have stated that one of the arrangements in the Papal Church, which rests on her tradition, is, the use of images in her worship. She must not disown it, for it was ordained in blood; and matured in darkness. Now to us, as it strikes the eye when entering these places of worship, it has, at least, the appearance of idolatry. It seems opposed to the Second Commandment. How then did it appear to the authorities of Rome? How have they reconciled their tradition to this Commandment? I answer, they could not do it at all, and instead of showing the tradition which reconciles the practice to the prohibition, they have blotted out this Commandment of the eternal God. The words, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down to them," &c., (Exod. xx. 4.) are not found in the Catechism for the young, recommended by the four Archbishops of Ireland, as a general Catechism for the kingdom. Here then, there is no question about the authenticity of the text; or its interpretation; but if this

Church's claim be conceded, her tradition is dashed in the face of Scripture, to the perfect annihilation of all our faith.*

It is against this terrific license that our Lord directs his severest reprehension. It needs no one to tell us that there were traditions held and respected by the Jews. This is made too plain in the evangelical history, to be in the least disputed. Jesus has also explained to us the effect which resulted from their observance. They transgressed the commandment of God by their tradition. In the most obvious and tender duties, they dared to explain away the force of the Divine precept; and thus they made the commandment of God of none effect by their tradition. In their words, they professed to revere God; but in their reasonings, and actions they most grievously insulted his authority. On this, the Redeemer of men based his heavy charges of hypocrisy. His sermon on the Mount is full of cases which justify this charge; and of awful admonitions to those who fall under it; and yet the advocates of these unwritten oracles of Rome, will, with reckless daring, appeal to the fact of these traditions having existed, to confirm their reliance in their own. If, then, they will follow the example of the Scribes and Pharisees, let them also take their reproof. If they will follow the traditions of man, rather than the commandments of God, let them prepare for that condemnation which the Saviour of men, has, with

* In the English and some other Catechisms, the second command is now re-inserted as part of the first; while the tenth is still divided to make the number complete. Nothing can show more plainly the flexibility of this ever changing sytsem.

so much, and such compassionate severity denounced against them. "In vain do ye worship me teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." "Every plant which my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind : and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

And yet, in all that provoked these reprehensions of the most merciful ; there was nothing to compare with the folly of this *man* of sin. Theirs was the childhood of crime ; this is the maturity of it. The traditionary revelations of the patriarchal age had been so corrupted, as to require the promulgation of a written law. This written law was then so warped from its original purpose as to be made of none effect : when Jesus Christ came to recall our species *again* from the brink of ruin ; and give to us the *Gospel* revelation. But it remained for a Church calling itself after his own name, to corrupt his oracles of mercy ; to blot his precepts from the sacred page ; to withhold his promises of grace from the guilty and the destitute, and to issue from their solemn meeting their connected chains of curses ; which, whether they be founded on the sacraments, the ministry, or the justification of sinners before God, are almost invariably directed *against* the truth.

But, you my brethren, have not so learned Christ. Guided by his word, you have been led to revere God rather than men. Thus, may you ever find, the peace which his merciful faithfulness is pledged to secure. Nor let the insidious suggestion, that these our oracles are insufficient to direct us through this wilderness, at all

intimidate you. In them you will find treasures yet to be explored, which lie beyond the present ranges of human thought. Often as its blissful themes, lead you to the throne of grace, and give you a position, of no mean distance, from the light in which Jehovah dwells; rather bless him for the fulness of what he gives, than complain of the trial which may exercise your faith. When difficulties come, commune with these oracles in prayer; and, by both you will have fellowship with God. Let these streams of light, poured from the fountain of light itself, refresh and satisfy your soul. Trace each emanation of glory, which, through it, beams upon your soul, to the fountain of glory itself; for, the God who has called you to his own fellowship, is not unfaithful to his promises. Never will you find him reluctant to receive you: and when you have reached the extent of this your earthly privilege, you will, beneath his smile, wait in peace, for the final consummation of your joy.

LECTURE III.

ON THE CORRUPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS.

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.—Rom. iv. 11, 12.

IN the 27th of Deuteronomy, and at the 17th verse, we have these words, “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour’s land-mark. And all the people shall say, Amen.” By this it is clear, that God intended to enforce on the Jews an inviolable justice in their regard to personal property. That this principle was extended to that respect which is due to the blessing which we derive from the word of God, is plain from the conclusion of the Revelations. “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the curses

that are written in this book ; and if any man shall take from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city ; and from the things which are written in this book." The principle by which these two denunciations are connected, is also plain ; for the Old and New Testaments are, to us, as the title deeds by which we hold an imperishable inheritance of Divine mercy ; and when these become blotted or corrupted, it obscures both our own title to all that deserves our supreme regard ; and the law by which God himself claims the continued service of his people. And since, in every case, we condemn, without any apology, those who destroy or erase the deeds of another's inheritance, as well as he who forges a deed by which he would claim, unjustly, a property to himself ; we have, in this case of the Church of Rome, pronounced her both as worthy of rebuke, and as unworthy of confidence, because she has, first, corrupted the two Testaments of God ; and secondly, because she has forged a body of unwritten oracles by which she claims an authority with which she never has been righteously invested.

Two facts render the sin of this Church more grievously reprehensible than that which can be perpetrated in any other case : first, these two inspired documents relate, not to a temporal and earthly estate, but to one that is heavenly and eternal ; and, secondly, man is not the only claimant in this suit ; God has a property in his people, and in their service, as much as they have in him, and in his blessing ; and, if the Church of Rome had not been moved with pity for mankind, against

whose everlasting interests she has raised a dreadful barrier ; she ought to have been overawed by the demands of Deity.

Moreover, God has displayed, in reference to these two Testaments of grace, a more than ordinary providential care. As soon as the books of the Old Testament were written, the Hebrew language ceased to be spoken ; and, when the books of the New Testament had been completed, the Greek language underwent such changes as no longer to remain the same. The books of Scripture, therefore, with what other books of the same date exist, and there are many in the Greek, remain in a language which cannot be altered. The Testaments are thus rendered as secure as if they had been engraven on brass ; or composed in letters of diamond. In this, the Creator has shown his determination to have them observed, by giving to them an existence, and form, which are indestructible. It is these original Scriptures which are stamped with his authority ; not the garbled versions of different parties. Whatever the advantages they supply, or the necessities they leave, these are deposited with his Church, and are, like the tables of the law, in the Ark of the Sanctuary, document , which all are bound, in the fear of God, to hold inviolable ; and, to which the whole race of man is compelled to yield a devout obedience. The act of this Church, therefore, in dishonouring these Sacred Scriptures, and in forging her unwritten oracles, resembles that of a profane and sacrilegious impostor, who, stealing into the Ancient Sanctuary, erases from the tablets on which Jehovah wrote his precepts, the origi 1

commands, and writes his own imaginations there; or, purloining these memorials of Divine condescension, deposits in their stead the legends and absurdities of romance.

That this reprehension is not too severe, I have already shown in the treatment of the Second Commandment; which, in their Catechisms, has been erased, in order to afford a shelter for their idolatry in using images in Christian worship. They have gone farther than this; for since these precepts are known to be *ten*, and not *nine*, they have divided the tenth into two, that, by making the number complete, they may give perfection to their artifice; and thus each child who repeats them is compelled to declare a falsehood; for these, as he learns them, are *not the Ten Commandments of God*.*

Besides the profane act of daring to authorise and regulate the use of that which God has imposed upon all. I might add to this most clear example, multitudes of others, in which the ordinances of Rome are flatly opposed to the positive injunctions of Sacred Scripture. They are found in almost all the decrees of the Council of Trent. Their anathemas on justification are almost all directed against the truth. Their claim to infallibility, and the supremacy of the Pope; is contrary

* Since this was delivered, I have been shown a Catechism, in which the words of the Second Commandment are found. It is for England, and the Second Commandment is united to the First, and the Tenth remains divided. This shows the fact of its former omission, and the cause of its re-adoption. Such an imposition would be too gross for England with her Bibles, but it is still retained in Ireland.

to Scripture, as it is to reason and history. The honours they have decreed to their saints, is such, as God has solemnly condemned. In fine, wherever the interests of godliness have been most concerned, the inventions and curses of Rome have been most pointedly directed against the truth ; but, instead of expanding your thoughts over too wide a surface, allow me to fix them now on that one illustration and proof, which is furnished in their corruption of the Christian sacraments.

Amongst the Old Testament institutions, there are two, to which this name may in some sense be applied. When Abraham had, by faith in the Divine promise, been justified in possessing the privileges and hopes of a friend of God : he by God's appointment was circumcised : and, as all his male posterity were, by the promise made to him, justified in expecting that they might be the progenitors of Messiah, they also were circumcised ; their very bodies being thus consecrated to this sacred purpose ; and, when the great deliverance from Egypt was wrought ; the passover was instituted, by which, besides the commemoration of their rescue, the Lord was pleased to teach them, that, the Messiah whom they expected, would redeem them by blood. Thus, by one sacrament their persons were consecrated ; and, by the other, their hope was explained. This renewal of the promise of Messiah, rendered it more obvious to the whole world ; and all attention was fixed on the line of his descent ; and these sacraments were the seals of their covenant, as well as the signs of their mercy. They were born to be progenitors of Messiah ; they had also an inheritance adapted to the end of their existence ; and

to this inheritance they were sealed by the sacrament which sealed the faith of Abraham.

When the Saviour was born, no further reason remained for his progenitors to be distinguished; and this circumcision of the Jews, if retained at all, it must have been merely to bind that nation together, until the providence of God shall have completed the mystery of their discipline on earth; and realised in them, through the *reception* of their Messiah, the fruition of the hope of their fathers; in the same way, the Paschal feast can have no greater effect now, than that which it supplies in the rebuke of their impenitent unbelief towards him, who, descending from their fathers, hath redeemed us to God by his own blood. These sacraments, therefore, have ceased to be of force in the Church of God; and in their stead, two have been appointed by our Lord. As circumcision marked, and distinguished, from all kinds of heathen, the *inheritors* of the temporal promise made to Abraham: so baptism, marks the *inheritors* of the spiritual blessings of Christ. He who became an inheritor, as a Jew, was circumcised: and he who becomes an inheritor, as a Christian, is baptised. So also with respect to the Paschal Lamb, composed with the Supper of our Lord, the former showed what kind of redemption the Messiah would procure: the latter, verifies the substance of this type, and shows forth the Lord's death until he come.

Thus, there were two sacraments of the Old Testament, which were signs of the ancient faith—and thus also, there are two sacraments in the New Testament, which are signs and seals of the Christian faith. Their

existence, and history, are, themselves, irrefragible proofs of the inspiration of Sacred Scripture; and are, in the experience of real Christians, as accrediting and authorising signatures, placed by the hand of Jehovah himself, to the deed of their salvation.

The first error to be submitted for your consideration here, therefore, is, the multiplication of these sacraments. In the New Testament there are two; but in the Church of Rome there are seven. For these additional five, therefore, there is no Divine authority. Secondly, the very nature of these sacraments is changed; so changed, that instead of being the signs and seals of faith, taking the place of all instruction, they are made the means of communicating faith; they are not the seals of grace, but the channels through which grace is supposed to be conveyed to mankind.

Before I enter on the explanation of these topics, however, allow me to lay before you my authorities.

First, then,—

Q. “What is the third thing necessary to salvation?—

A. To receive the sacraments with the requisite dispositions.

Q. What is a sacrament?—A. It is a sensible sign of invisible grace, ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of souls.

Q. How many sacraments are there?—A. Seven. Baptism, confirmation, penance, eucharist, extreme unction, holy orders, and matrimony.

Q. What is baptism?—A. It is a sacrament which cleanseth us from original sin, maketh us Christians, children of God, and of the Church.”—*Catholic Catechism*.

Secondly, in Dr. Wiseman's Lectures, we have the following, p. 53.

“The Catholic Church teaches, and I beg of you to remember that I am not proving the doctrine taught, but

am simply laying it before you, that you may understand what I shall proceed on another occasion to prove. The doctrine of the Catholic Church upon this head is, that faith is not the production of man's ingenuity ; that it is not the result of his study or investigation ; but that it is a virtue essentially infused by God in baptism ; and which, I suppose, must be more or less the belief of every Church which adopts the practice of infant baptism."

I make no remark at present on the words, but pass directly to a third authority. Father Paul Sarpi, in the History of the Council of Trent, has given us the steps by which this doctrine was brought to its present state. The fourth article to be discussed was,

"That the sacraments of the new law do not give grace to those who do not resist.

"All the fathers thought that this should be condemned, yea, that it was necessary to amplify it, condemning the doctrine of Zuinglius in particular, who will have the sacraments to be but signs, by which the faithful are discerned from infidels ; or acts and exercises of the profession of Christian faith, having no other relation to grace, but as signs that one has received it. After, they treated of condemning those who deny that sacraments confer grace, to him that putteth not a bar, or do not confess that grace is contained in the sacraments, and conferred, not by virtue of faith, but (*ex opere operato*). But coming to expound how they are contained, and their casualty, every one did agree, that grace is found by all those actions that excite devotion. Which proceedeth not from the force of the work itself, but from the work of devotion, which is in the worker, and these are said in the schools to cause grace (*ex opere operantis*). There are other actions which cause grace, not by the devotion of him that worketh, or of him that receiveth the work, but by *virtue of the work itself*. Such are the Christian sacraments by which grace is received, so that there be no bar of mortal sin against it, though *there be not any devotion*. So by the work of baptism, grace is given to the infant, whose mind is not moved towards it, and to one born a fool, because there is no impediment of sin. The sacrament of Chrism doth the like, and that of extreme unction, though the sick man hath lost his memory."—*Sarpi*, book ii.

This passage explains the origin of this expression relating to the sacraments. We shall now see the declaration of its use. It is declared in Canon the Eighth on the sacraments,

“Whoever shall affirm, that grace is not conferred by these sacraments of the new law, by their own power (*ex opere operato*) ; but that faith in the Divine promise is all that is necessary to obtain grace ; *let him be accursed.*”

Here, then, is the great point of my charge. It is not respecting any minute peculiarity in the form of a sacrament. Five have been invented without the authority of Scripture or God. And all have been changed from their true intention. The invention and imposition of those which God has not appointed, are forgeries, made and issued in the name of the Lord ; while the changing all their nature, converts into instruments of death, the very appointments of Divine mercy ; and uses them to strike at the very root of personal godliness.

Before I advance to the several particulars in which these ordinances of Rome, are, in this instance, opposed to the word of God ; you will pardon me for submitting one word of explanation. The fathers, in the Council of Trent, were so divided on this subject, that they could not issue a positive declaration of this doctrine. Many schemes were devised, and many terms of compromise were suggested, but on no one proposal were they able to meet. They issued their anathemas, on this subject, and nothing else. Hence, every quotation is followed with a curse ; and though in issuing these, they were all united, yet it will be seen, that every curse is levelled directly against the truth.

The first case, however, is suggested by the words of Mr. Wiseman.

“ Faith (he says) is not the result of study or investigation, but a virtue essentially infused by God in baptism.”

The words of the apostle Paul are these, “ So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Now, the word of God is an intelligible sound, or sign, by which the mind of God comes to be understood. But this must be investigated before it can be believed. Hence, the cases in Scripture do not indicate that “ faith was a virtue essentially infused by God in baptism ;” they all suppose, or declare, the existence of faith, before the baptism was administered. If the words of our opponents were to be taken, the commission of our Lord must be changed. Instead of saying, believe and be baptized ; it would have been written, be baptized, and thou shalt believe, be baptized and thou shalt repent. In Scripture, faith precedes the sacrament ; but in the Church of Rome, the sacrament comes before faith, and actually supersedes the investigation of truth, which is necessary to its existence.

Secondly, in the passage I have read to you as a text, the apostle states, as the sole ground of all his reasoning, that Abraham’s faith was reckoned to him for righteousness ; and that the sacrament was given as a sign of his acceptance, and a seal of his privilege, and of the faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised. He was, herefore, justified by faith, without the deeds of the law—without the sacrament—before the sacrament was

instituted. Here, therefore, we have a clear case in which the apostle declares the attainment of justification by faith alone. But in the fourth Canon of Trent, you have these words—

“Whosoever shall affirm that the sacraments of the new law are not necessary to salvation, but superfluous ; or that man may obtain the grace of justification by faith only, *without these sacraments : let him be accursed !*”

Thirdly, much stress is laid on the term “*new law*,” as if this differed from the old law, in this essential feature. But, in this same connexion of my text, the apostle declares, most distinctly, that the faith of Abraham is the faith of Christians ; and that sinners become the children of Abraham by faith. His intelligent confidence in the comprehended promises, is thus exhibited, as an example to the whole body, both of Jews and Gentiles. This faith, in the Messiah, therefore is, that by which we are justified. Our faith, therefore, must be like his, and our sacraments must be like his. The latter supposing the former in their very nature and use. But, in the second Canon, we have these words :—

“Whoever shall affirm that the sacraments of the new law only differ from those of the old law, in that their ceremonies and external rules are different—let him be accursed.”

And again, Canon six—

“Whosoever shall affirm that the sacraments of the new law do not contain the grace which they signify, or that they do not confer that grace on those who place no obstacle in its way, as if they were only the external signs of grace or righteousness recorded by faith and marks of Christian profession, whereby the faithful are distinguished from unbelievers—*let him be accursed.*”

Moreover, fourthly, in the Acts of the Apostles, we

have the case of Simon Magus. This is recorded as occurring in the labours of Peter himself, whose authority ought not to be suspected at Rome. Simon, therefore, was baptized, he was united to the Church and to all its communion. He must have received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with all its (*ex opere operato*) benefits; yet the apostle declares, that he was not only still in sin, but in the depth of its dominion, not in bitterness, merely; he was in the gall of bitterness. His was not iniquity alone, it was the bond of iniquity. Thus, also, in the First of Corinthians, ch. xi. 27. the apostle Paul declares, that to eat the Lord's Supper without faith, was not only not good, it was eating and drinking damnation to themselves. And the reason for this declaration is quite plain. They took the bread which represented the body of that Redeemer in whose salvation they would not confide; and they took the cup of the New Testament in his blood, while their hearts were still in a state of rebellion against that very Testament of mercy; while they were living in the contempt of its blessings. Thus, therefore, it is plain, that baptism did not give grace to Simon; and further, that grace in active energy was required to a proper appropriation of the eucharist. In truth, through all the Sacred Scriptures, both these sacraments always suppose the pre-existence of decided piety in those who properly receive them. But, in the Canons of Rome, the case is exactly the reverse. Canon VIII.

“Whoever shall affirm that grace is not conferred by these sacraments of the new law, by *their own power* (*ex opere operato*); but that faith in the Divine promise is all that is necessary to obtain grace—*let him be accursed.*”

And again, Canon IX.

“Whoever shall affirm that a character—that is a certain spiritual and indelible mark is not impressed on the soul by the three sacraments, baptism, confirmation, and ordination, for which reason they cannot be repeated—*let him be accursed.*”

If this character was impressed on Simon, how could he have been still in the gall of bitterness? If it had been impressed and then erased, how could the character impressed in the sacrament be indelible?

My brethren, it is altogether absurd, and totally opposed to the sacred truth of God—and yet, fifthly, the principle is extended still further in the first Canon on these sacraments. Though we have but two mentioned in the book of God; yet the words of the decree are,

“Whoever shall affirm that the sacraments of the new law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, or that they are more or fewer than seven, namely, baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony, or that any of these are not truly and properly a sacrament—*let him be accursed.*”

Thus, through the whole range of human life, this official communication of grace is rendered necessary to Christian character, while the cultivation of true piety, is by the same means, both impeded and neglected.

To this point, I shall have to advert again; but, first, I must submit to you a sixth opposition to the Divine law, which is found in these decrees. Peter in his address to Simon Magus, says distinctly, thou hast no part or lot in the matter, for I perceive that thou art still in the *gall* of bitterness, and in the *bond* of iniquity. This *gall* of bitterness and *bond* of iniquity, was his avarice, which, notwithstanding his profession, he had brought with him into the Church. That he had done this, not

by the rule of the Church, but through deceiving its ministers, is plain from the words of Peter : " I perceive that thou art still in the gall," &c., express the feelings of surprise with which the apostle had made the discovery. It was this sin, therefore, which cut him off from the ministry. Thou hast no part or lot in this matter, for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. But in these decrees of Rome, it is said.

" Whosoever shall affirm that a minister who is in a state of mortal sin, does not perform, or confer a sacrament, although he observes everything that is essential" (that the Church says is essential) " to the performance and bestowment thereof *let him be accursed.*"

Against this, the case of Judas, with all its gloomy terrors, stands directly opposed : for, he fell from the office of an apostle by his transgression.

Oh, my beloved brethren, this is a heavy task. To follow the members of our species in the ordinary errors of life, is not without its bitterness : but here, we see them openly, and stubbornly, opposed to the words of eternal life. By these Canons we are reduced to the abstract question, whether we shall regard God or man, in that which is most vitally connected with the glory of Jehovah, and the safety of souls. By these sacraments, thus corrupted, all religion, is removed from the heart to the skin of the worshipper ; and from the spirit of Jehovah, to the action of a priest. What may be his character ; whether he be holy, or profane ; whether he be the best, or the worst of mankind ; is, by a direct anathema, reduced to no importance. Nor is it the outward act, which the worshipper may examine, that determines the supposed effect of these sacraments : the priest must

thoughtfully intend all that the Church has appointed. When this is done, the sacrament, essential to salvation, is said to be complete, although the priest is known to be living in mortal sin : he may be drunk at the time : he may be adulterous : he may be revengeful : yet the helpless victim lies at the mercy of his inward intentions. By this most cruel artifice, the power of a polluted priesthood, is raised to a certain resemblance with that of Deity. When he is administering a sacrament, he can, by a single thought, blast for ever the interests of an immortal soul : and leave him, deluded by false impressions of safety, until, in the day of God, when there is no remedy for his mistake, he finds that the sacrament essential to his salvation, was administered with wrong intentions by his priest.

Look at this again. First, the sacraments are essential to salvation. Secondly, the character of the priest is of no importance, though he be living in mortal sin. Yet, thirdly, the effect of the sacrament depends on the intention of the priest. Therefore, it is plain as the day-beam, that all the salvation of the soul may come to rest on the *secret intention of a bad man*—who is living in mortal, that is, in damning sin.

You will see the importance of this fact, when in the next Lecture I have shown you the evils which result from Popery in its degradation of the Christian ministry. But now I must request your attention to the effect of this error, even in the best case that can be imagined.

For, in the first place, the mind is diverted from that which is personal, to that which is relative ; and from that which is spiritual, to that which is physical : from

that which is to be performed in a man's own heart, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, to that which is performed by a priest on his skin. It is his baptism, not his obedience to the word of God, that makes him a Christian, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. As soon as he begins to think, he is made to believe, that the great work of regeneration has transpired. For this, he may be indebted to parents and friends, and priests; but he has no connexion with God in the affair. He never prayed for it, never felt its necessity, never learned the nature of the change, in seeking it, he never reposed on the promises. He was without thought, without feeling, without faith, without any concern, without any moral relation to the act whatever. His own regeneration has no more to do with him, or he with it, than that of any other creature. It developes in him no thought or fear of God, and it introduces him into a state in which the thought of God, and the fear of God, both are, and must be, matters of indifference. This is not merely rendering wisdom imperfect, it is blasting the very germ, the beginning of wisdom. It is possessing the infant mind with an error, which all experience shows to be, both opposed to the word of God, and destructive in the highest degree to the souls of men.

For, in the second place, supposing that the officiating priest be a good man, and therefore, that he do what the Church of Rome promises to do—that is, that he leads them by instruction to understand the word of God. Then the first lesson to be learned is, that this sacrament of regeneration, which has been solemnly admi-

nistered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is no regeneration at all. In this case, he will have to give up all respect for the priesthood, and the Church, by which he was plunged into this mistake ; or else, to give up the Scriptures, and all concern for his salvation. If he be faithful to his trust, the word of the teacher, when explaining the Scriptures, will be the opposite of that he used, when administering the sacraments ; and, by his solemn instruction, he will rebuke his own act in the administration of the sacraments. The effect of this alone, must be, pernicious beyond all calculation ; but, in the Church of Rome, it is even worse. Because they can find no support for such absurdity in the book of God, they have recourse to their unwritten oracles. From these, they bring the several authorities by which this theory is to be sustained. They openly declare that, for their fatal peculiarities, no support can be found in the book of God ; and they derive, therefore, the whole force of their appointment from the Church. In her power to decree and alter the ceremonies of religion, they have an instrument suited to their use, in every country, and in every age. What she declares, must be true : and, what she appoints must be right, because she is infallible. From her tribunal there is no appeal, at least, beneath the heavens. But, though there is a momentary convenience in the expedient, it is pregnant with consequences the most momentous. When her worshippers open the book of God, they find in almost every page, some most irrefragable proof of their delusion. They there hear a voice,

uttering in mild but awful majesty, the Divine requirement of spiritual worship; while they have been led to put their trust in mere formalities. Here they are invited to draw nigh to God, through one mediator: but in their Church, they have by many mediators been kept far from God. So great, and so many, and so important are the differences, between the practices they impose, and these oracles of truth, that, the uncorrupted pages of Revelation, are bound and sealed with severe restrictions; corrupted in their translations; and misquoted; and still more dreadfully misinterpreted in their books. The Sacred Scriptures stand, through all disadvantages, testifying against these grievous violations of the Divine law. Revelation is thus dashed against Revelation; and that which professes to be the only house of God, is rent and divided against itself. If any one should still retain a spark of intelligent regard for truth, the clamouring declamations of Papal defence, would entangle and perplex him even to madness; and, if he be not prepared to forsake this mother of inventions, he must find his peace in her fellowship, only through the contempt of truth. Hence proceeds the result, which all experience has supported, and still supports; which is, that the *faith which the Church of Rome exacts* is compounded of two mental elements, the first of which, is an absolute submission to this human priesthood; and secondly, an entire neglect of God and of his truth. It thus merits in all its votaries the solemn declaration of Jeremiah.—“Cursed is man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; and whose heart departeth from the Lord.”

In all these facts relating to the sacraments of Rome, we are met by an objection which may be stated, in those words of Mr. Wiseman, in which he affirms,

“That it, (faith) is a virtue essentially infused by God in baptism; and which I suppose, *must be more or less the belief of every Church which adopts the practice of infant baptism.*”

In this, there is some mistake, for many who hold this practice do not believe that any child either ever was, or ever could be regenerated by baptism. But, candour requires me to admit, that, respecting some, who are called Protestants in this country, the statement is quite true. Some time since, a popular minister of this city, delivered a discourse to his respectable audience, the theme and substance of which might seem to have been borrowed from this very passage of Mr. Wiseman. The same sentiment is widely and cheaply retailed in those publications, which are known by the title of the Oxford Tracts. It is lamentable also to state, that these instruments of death, are extensively diffused amongst our village and agricultural population; while the same evil may, with its pernicious effects, be traced in the Protestant Churches on the Continent. But the admission of these most lamentable truths, gives no force to the *argumentum ad hominem* of our adversaries. We are not pleading for the perfection of Churches called Protestant; but for the rights, and importance of personal and vital godliness. In that sublime simplicity which graces the constitution of our own Churches; God, the Father of our mercies, has kindly granted us a strong and highly advantageous position, and from this, in his fear, seeking no prominence of party, but longing for his glory, and the safety of souls, on the sole authority of our inspired

oracles, we solemnly denounce this pernicious error; whether it be cherished in Canterbury, in Germany, or in Rome.

Besides, whatever these Protestants may have to say in settling this dispute between themselves and the Catholic teachers: this, at least, must be alleged in their behalf. The error did not originate with them. If to the eternal misfortune of millions they still retain the delusion; the advocates of Rome are not the men to remark upon it. It is a virus that runs from their own disease; it is the blast of their own pestilence; and it only serves to disseminate with us the mortality that ravages their own population.

And, further, those who advocate under the name of Protestants, any portion of these Papal errors; may learn a most important lesson from this chapter in the Council of Trent. Few documents in the language of men present so complete a contrast with the spirit and the example of the Redeemer. When he stood, surrounded by the Publicans, the Scribes, the Pharisees, and sinners of every character; raising his gentle voice above the murmur of their various opposition, he exclaimed—"come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; come, take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Such were the words and aspect of Immanuel. But those who claim exclusively the right of being called his ministers and servants, have here displayed a character, decidedly the reverse. For, though this Council of Trent, was so divided in its discussions on the sacraments, that, no compromise, or in-

fluence, would make them meet and agree in any positive declaration of their views; yet they could exhibit, or exercise, no clemency towards others, not supposed to possess their fancied infallibility. If they could not agree in what they believed, however, they resolved to agree in what they condemned; and not more in the matter they rejected, then they did in the spirit of its denunciation. In the first case, they seemed to advance towards unanimity, just as the matter in hand appeared to be essential to the power of Rome, and opposed to the oracles of God! But, in the spirit of their denunciations, there is a perfect uniformity; since every declaration is burdened with an anathema: so that, during their meetings on this particular, the fathers appear to me, not like holy saints consulting and worshipping in the smile of heaven; but rather resembling a band of desperadoes in a cave, who, fearing an exposure by every diminution of the darkness that embodied them, were venting their delirious curses at the opening of day.

And if there should remain any who are disposed to leave the meek and lowly Jesus with his great salvation, for the vain imaginations of these imprecating mortals; let them before they take the fatal step, consider well the end of all these *fatherly* deliberations. By making the sacraments the means of communicating grace, and absolutely essential to salvation; and then investing the priesthood with its authority to administer the sacraments; they originated an earthly power, more dreadful, than any civil ruler could exert. Not on their faith in Christ, or faithfulness to God; but, on the official

actions of the priesthood, were all the spiritual interests of the people thus suspended. Through the influence of their confessional, all domestic and personal secrets became robbed of their decent veil of privacy; while the blight of a pestilence is seen to rest on all that is dear to man. For the oppressor, indeed, you may see, procured by this arrangement, a haughty station, great wealth, and unbounded luxury: but, to the oppressed, and benighted people, nothing can result, but endless exactions, pangs of conscience, and, danger of damnation in the world to come.

Brethren, I would not afflict your feelings with other facts, were it not my duty to state, the extent, to which this fatal influence operates through the life of man. Baptism, with its falsely imputed regenerating power, begins the delusion on the threshold of life. As soon as the youthful energies are evolved, this is increased in confirmation. The mass is a standing and heathen instrument, both of delusion, and extortion. Penance enters into the most afflictive and delicate operations of the mind, smothering in the soul the very voice of conscience. Matrimony extends the delusion over all the intimacies of domestic life. Orders regulate the exercises of personal zeal; and, finally, the sacrament of extreme unction finishes the scene. Thus, from the cradle to his grave, the victim has no respite. He bears his burden of calamity through every stage of human existence; and finds it increase, most dreadfully, at the end. As exhibited in these Canons on the sacrament, Popery appears to verify that monstrous symbol

in the Apocalyptic vision, which waits at the womb, to seize its victim, as soon as it is born. That which, through mercy, escapes, is followed by a flood of sorrows ; but that which is seized, is bound as by the master spirit of perdition, and blinded till it stumbles into hell.

My dear brethren, I have often wished, if possible, to find some view of the case, on which, I might conclude that these policies, with their tremendous effects, had resulted from involuntary mistake : but you shall judge of my difficulty, from one case which may be briefly stated here. Cardinal Cajetan, was mentioned in a former Lecture, as taking an active part in these discussions of Trent. He was a Dominican, the Romish sect, with whom originated the Inquisition. In the year 1518, he was employed as legate, to settle the religious differences of Germany. In that year, Luther was brought before his tribunal at Augsburg. There the Reformer declared his own views of salvation ; and made his appeal to the Sacred Scriptures, as to the last, and chief authority. In their interview, the judge, had every advantage that earthly power could give ; the accused, had all possible disadvantages, attended with the imminent peril of life. But, Luther's appeals to Scripture, were so direct, and so conclusive ; that, the Cardinal writhed, recoiled, and become dumb before him. The scene resembled that of Paul, and Felix, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Cajetan, had nothing wherewith to defend, either the Church of Rome, or, his own extravagant assertion—that, *one drop of Christ's blood was enough to redeem the whole world* : and that, *all the rest that he shed, in the garden, and on the cross, formed a fund of merit to be sold*

by the Church in her indulgences. By the poor Monk he was perfectly repulsed : and compelled to reply, that, he came there, not to discuss, but to demand submission. Luther did not submit ; and, the reserve of the Cardinal, might have left us, quite ignorant respecting the effect, of this interview upon his mind. But, his own confession, in the Council of Trent, revealed the secret. These discussions, and the passing of these anathemas at Trent, transpired in 1547. During the interval, Cajetan had been forced to study the original Scriptures, through the means of Greek and Hebrew interpreters. By twenty-nine years of study, therefore, he was led to the conclusion, that, "*had the doctors of Rome adhered to the sense of these Scriptures, the Lutheran heresy would never have existed.*" But, when he had learnt that the errors thus cherished, in his own Church, and for which he could find no apology, produced these bitter, and widely spreading calamities, did he renounce the errors? by no means—his hand was joined with all the rest in passing these curses against the truth of God. Judge ye, therefore, whether in this adherence to these fatal errors, there be not a voluntary guiltiness ; which, solemnly, and most peremptorily, forbids your trust.

Wherefore, my beloved, flee from (this) idolatry : I speak as unto wise men ; consider what I say. Yes, ye children of many prayers, and inheritors of gospel light and liberty ; " come out from amongst them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty."

LECTURE IV.

ON THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF POPERY IN ENGLAND AS
THEY ARE SEEN IN THE DEGRADATION OF
THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work. A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach ; not given to much wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre ; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous ; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity ; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them, which are without ; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre ; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved ; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.”— 1 TIM. iii. 1—10.

THE completeness of these directions, indicates to all, that they must have reference to officers of principal

importance in the Christian Church. Others, indeed, did exist in the primitive age, as well as at the present time. There were apostles, and prophets, and workers of miracles, with others, endowed by the Holy Spirit, with gifts suited to those early emergencies, to which, his first servants were subjected, while asserting the claims of our Lord. But, since these gifts effected their end by their miraculous nature, they could not always continue; or they would by that very continuance, cease to be miracles. In the same way, at this present time, we may have brethren devoted to some particular engagements for the extension of the Church; they may be missionaries at home, or abroad; they may be secretaries, or committees, but all these have a reference to some particular object, which may continue only for a time. These, therefore, if called offices in the Church, are at least temporary offices; but the pastor, and the deacon are standing officers. If all the world were converted to God; so long as there are saints on earth, they will require their pastors to conduct their worship, and deacons to superintend their financial affairs. These, therefore, may properly be called standing and perpetual officers, while all the rest are casual and temporary.

To me, it seems, that the words, bishop, pastor, and elder, with others of similar import, though they may place it in different lights, yet, nevertheless, all refer to one officer: for they are so indifferently used, in the same passages, that the very same men are, at the same time, and in reference to the same subject, called, both elders, bishops, and pastors, or overseers

of the Church of God. But, should a difference of opinion be admitted here, and all the variety of offices be allowed, which Scripture, applied to the present state of the Church, might even seem to indicate. Still, there are, in the Church of Rome, multitudes of ordained officers, whose designations and authorities have, not even the slightest support in the book of God. The second chapter of the decrees, passed by the Council of Trent on the priesthood itself, supplies us with five examples—*Sub-Deacons, Acolytes, Exorcists, Readers, and Porters*. Allowing that they be all very well, as to their functions, they are not to be found in the Church, or in the written laws of the Church, as it appeared in the apostolical age. No application of Sacred Scripture, would give them any Divine authority now. Much less shall we there find even the smallest support for such officers, or clergy, as nuns, abbess, friar, abbot, metropolitan, patriarch, archbishop, and, above all, which is over all, *the Pope*. Whatever may be said for the expediency of their existence, it has no authority whatever in the inspired volume.

On this position, however, I shall lay no particular stress. It is my duty this evening, to explain, the violations of Divine law which are chargeable on the Church of Rome. First, through the method she observes in the election of her ministers: and, secondly, through the violations of Divine law which appear in the avocations to which she calls them. It matters little how many, or how few her officers may be; by these two errors it is impossible that they should be pure. By

these two paths, they are constantly seen, passing, as from a precipice, into utter degradation.

And, first, on the election of ministers, the argument rests not more on what is decreed, than on what is clearly neglected, both in the decree, and in all the practice of the Church. For though, by the authority of Pallavicini, who wrote his history of the Council of Trent, by the direction of the Papal See, many particulars were determined respecting the choice of individuals for the priesthood; yet none of them approached the solemn and most appropriate requisitions of my text. They fixed the age, the order, and the several formalities to be observed, in taking the tonsure: but they said nothing of personal piety. In perfect accordance, with every word of that decree, the worst man in this world might gain access to their highest offices. Agreeing with this principle, exactly, is all the practice recorded in history. For many ages, and in many countries, it was the policy of the Church to advance to her clerical schools the sons of her own serfs, or those of the proprietors in land, from whom they expected an augmentation in their estates at their decease. Hence it is often found, that the Abbot of some wealthy priory, was the son, generally a younger son, of some, adjacent nobleman. In Ireland, a system of policy resembling this, is now in active operation. The sons of little farmers are trained in the Catholic schools; and then advanced to Wexford, &c., from whence they proceed to other schools, still more advanced; and then they are introduced to public stations. In their elec-

tion, the existence, or non-existence of personal piety, is not in any way respected. All things are conducted on the supposition, that every member of the Church of Rome is not only under instruction, but under an official influence, which first secures his personal reconciliation to God ; and then, as he advances, secures his personal preparation, for the several offices he is called to fill.

Here, therefore, all the argument advanced in my last Lecture against the physical power of the sacraments, returns upon the adversary with augmented violence ; but, lest I should seem to impute what is not deserved, allow me to read in confirmation. The eighth Canon on the sacraments, and the fourth on ordination, and first, the eighth Canon of the sacraments in general—

“ Whosoever shall affirm, that grace is not conferred by these sacraments of the new law, *by their own power (ex opere operato,)* but that faith in the Divine promise is all that is necessary to obtain grace—*let him be accursed.*”

I showed you before, that this destroyed the requisition of piety which is everywhere enforced in Sacred Scripture, as a term of entering the Church. And now, if you attend while I read the fourth on ordination, you will see, that this, as perfectly, annihilates the requisition of piety as a term of entering the ministry.

“ Whosoever shall affirm, that the Holy Spirit is not given by ordination, and, therefore, that Bishops say in vain,” Receive ye the Holy Ghost, “ or that thereby a character is not impressed ; or that he who was once a priest may become a layman again—*let him be accursed.*”

Now, nothing can be more plain than this, the physical sacrament makes a child a Christian ; and then, a

physical sacrament makes a Christian a priest ; and by this sacramental absurdity, the exercise of piety is expelled from both.

In decreeing that a priest could not again become a layman, the fathers had forgotten the proceedings of their Church at the martyrdom of Huss at Prague. Before he was delivered to the flames, they placed him on a scaffold, and divested him of every vestment, and mark of the clerical character. They solemnly revoked the act of his ordination ; and then, as a layman, they delivered him to the civil power, that he might be burnt. We will not pause to trace the glories that have blazed from his ashes, both upon the countries of Europe and the world ; or, strive to reconcile the parts of a system which is everywhere discordant with itself, as with the truth ; but, let me rather lead you to one single passage, which, when compared with my text, will show the moral elevation, from which this Church, in these anathemas, has fallen.

I refer, my brethren, to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xv. ver. 29. The words are these—“ Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead : if the dead rise not at all, why then are they baptized for the dead ? ” The passage, you perceive, is quite an incidental one ; and, it is intended to supply an argument for the resurrection of the dead. But the difficulty has ever been, to find how the baptism of a living man can have any relation to a dead man. The Papists have taken the whole passage to confirm their doctrine of purgatory, as if the baptism on earth, yielded a relief to departed souls ; but, this was not the

opinion of the ancient fathers. Chrysostom, the most eloquent of all the Christian Greeks, excepting, probably, the apostle Paul, has left a clear exposition of its meaning. He says, that the apostle has here made a brief allusion to a sentence in common use amongst all the first Churches of Christ. When the candidates for Christian fellowship had been catechised and taught in all the mysteries that rise out of the four gospels, that is to say, when they had become acquainted with the person, words, work, and claims of Jesus Christ, advancing at the appointed time to the place of baptism; and, standing on the edge of the water, they were asked by the officiating minister, do you believe in the resurrection of the dead bodies. If he answered *yes, I confess it*, he was received into the water and baptized. The reason for this, is also assigned. During the first ages of the Church, the Christians were constantly brought before the heathen tribunals, that they might be compelled to sacrifice to idols; and, if they did not sacrifice, they were martyred; but, if they did sacrifice, they were excommunicated. Such, therefore, as died rather than sacrifice, were called confessors; for they confessed that they were baptized for the hope of the resurrection of the dead. The short way of saying this was—we are baptized for the dead, that is to say, for the resurrection of the dead. Not for the hopes of this world, but of that which is to come.

Here, then, is the point of the apostle's argument, and the basis of ours. He pleads with the Christians at Corinth thus; you, my brethren, deny that there is any resurrection from the dead; and yet you were bap-

tized for the hope of the resurrection of the dead ; if, as you now say, there is no resurrection of the dead, you have been baptized for nothing ; and those converts who are daily joining your Church, are baptized for nothing ; and you have resigned the hopes of this world, for nothing ; all those whom we see around us led to martyrdom, die for nothing ; and we stand in jeopardy every hour, and all for nothing ; if the dead rise not at all, our whole Church constitution is an absolute absurdity. Thus the Churches to which the apostolical Epistles were addressed, were so formed, as that the hope of the resurrection of the dead alone, could give consistency, either to their baptismal vow, or to the discipline by which they were governed ; for the absolute term of their fellowship with the Church, consisted in their being ready at any hour, to suffer martyrdom for Christ. But this was not to be produced by a baptism in water : they were first to be baptized in the truth, and in the Spirit. It was by the immersion of their souls in the sacred doctrine, and the imbuing of their hearts with the Divine influence, that they were trained to this fellowship of Christian confessors. It is to them, with these habits, and duties, and prospects, that all the appointments of the Christian Church are adapted. The officers of the Church were taken from their society, not from that of heathens, or of Jews. It is in reference to this society, with the several degrees of eminence, which might be observed in its individual members, that all the words used by the apostle to define the qualifications of its officers, must be interpreted. Paul is not speaking of men in the world, but

of men in the Church, who have given up the world. When he says, "The Bishop must be blameless;" he expresses a different idea from that conveyed by the sentence—"Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without," he means that this candidate for the Bishop's office, must first have a good report in the world, and then as a further and higher requirement, he must be blameless in the Church. You may see this from the very first requirement, for in the world, at that time, he would not have been blamed, if he had many wives at the same time; but, to be blameless in the Church, he must have but one. Hence, the vigilant, sober, polite, hospitable candidate for the Christian ministry, must be one who is so regarded, and who on these points is blameless in the Church. He might be called grave at a theatre—sober, in a tavern—generous, on the change—and patient, in a mob of rioters—and yet, in a company of men, who, having given up the world, had been baptized for the resurrection of the dead: he might be covered with blame on all these particulars. Hence, too, the appellation given to the office itself—it is *καλον εργον*, a beautiful employment, to preside over saints in their worship, in their conflict with sin, in their labours of love, in their defence of the truth, and in their advance to eternal glory. His character, therefore, must be adapted to them, and to their holy undertaking: for, it is in the midst of their society, and in reference to their continual warfare, that he is to become an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, and in purity; and finally, it is over them that he must acquire a moral

influence suited to his spiritual ministrations, by giving to this, his holy example, a clearness and a power that shall defy contempt.

In this, therefore, the arrangements of the Church agree with those in ordinary prudence. If an army be raised, and sent on some hazardous expedition ; no king would commit it to the guidance and command of a recruit : if too, in any responsible office of the State, we see an inexperienced mind, totally unprepared for its duties, yet holding his station for the emoluments of office : we say, that it is corruption that has placed him there. Thus, in this great science and warfare of practical Christianity, the apostle declares, that, the minister of Christ must not be a novice. In the army, a veteran would be chosen ; in the senate a tried politician ; in order that each affair might be conducted to the greatest advantage : and thus the minister of the Church, must be a good soldier of Jesus Christ : ready to fight the good fight of faith ; to tread with humble serenity the path of life ; walking in the foremost ranks of consecrated men ; and laying hold on eternal life whereunto also *he* must have been called.

The same principle, is, you perceive, applied both to pastors and deacons. *These also must be first proved ;* proved in the crucible of Christian discipline and experience. By this, the mind and heart are subjected to Christian principle ; imbued with its influence ; and enriched with its most holy treasures. Under this regimen, the intelligence is filled with Divine doctrine, and the heart with Divine love. Faith, by the healthful combination of these, produces in the soul, and in the

life, a character, and habit, through which the minister of Christ, is known to have been with Jesus. The successors to the work of the apostles, are thus made successors to the faith, the love, the zeal, the self consecration of the apostles. But the Church of Rome is flatly opposed to this. Almost the only doctrine they curse, is the doctrine of Christ,—the only men they excommunicate, are the imitators of Christ,—and while they curse with heavy violence every positive requisition of the apostle, by greasing the head with oil, a mummerly of words which the apostles never heard, a mountebank of rites which apostles never saw, and a blasphemous misappropriation of Scripture phrases, they pretend to make successors to the dignity, and power of the apostles, men who, had they lived in their age, could only have received from their assembly, an absolute and unqualified apostolical execration. Yes, my brethren, could they be present now, amidst the scenes which thus daily transpire in Christian, Protestant, as well as Roman Churches, they would loose their ordinary calmness; and rending their garments in rage, they would condemn our folly, as when they rebuked the idolaters of Lystra. Oh! if Peter rising from the dead, could now be seated in the chair, reputed, as his, at Rome, instead of confirming their sacrilegious demands, their follies, and their impure society, he would repeat with augmented abhorrence his ancient reprehension in Samaria; and, frowning them from the place of their spiritual tyranny, he would exclaim, “Ye have no part or lot in this matter, for I perceive, that, ye are still in the gall of bitterness, and in the very bond of iniquity.”

In proof of this position, nothing further can be needed than a faithful comparison of the conclave at Rome; with the company of apostles who met in Jerusalem: for they do not, with all their advance in earthly possessions, differ so much in temporal, as in spiritual things. Their characters, policy, and the very end of their existence, are essentially diverse. In the consistory of cardinals there are seventy votes, and these are as much a matter of bargain and sale, as any earthly property whatever. As each cardinal is eligible to the See of Rome, it is a point of common interest, to concentrate for it the greatest power in every nation: for, the more his sources of gain are augmented, the greater value will be placed, both on the Papal chair itself, and also on every vote which is available for its occupation. Thus, the crime of Simon Magus, is, to the simony of Rome, in the present day; but as a speck upon the skin, to a corrupt and widely-spreading ulcer, which preys upon the breast and vitals of humanity. Of the purity, and self-denying zeal of the apostles, there is no vestige: the end of their existence is not even recognized; for, these laboured after humility, and holiness, and usefulness; but the great struggle at Rome, is, for power, corruption, and earthly gain. It is to these points, that all the provincial clergy of Rome must conform, how distant soever from the seat of rule, the scene of their labour may be; or how varied soever the nations in which they officiate. Of this, I shall have to present you several indisputable proofs; but first, I must state to you,

II. The degradation to which its avocations have been reduced.

Through the first twelve chapters of his Epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul has exhibited an argument of most irresistible force, to prove that, under the Gospel dispensation, we are shut in by the authority of God, to one priest, to one victim, and to one sacrifice for sin : for Jesus Christ, has by one offering, perfected, for ever, them that are sanctified. While the Gospel minister confines himself to the great duty of teaching the power of this redemption, and of persuading individual sinners to embrace it, he retains a most exalted function ; for, being an ambassador for God, he not only asserts the claim of Jehovah on our obedience, but he declares in the name of Jehovah, an atonement, which he himself will honour in all our present necessities, as well as in the judgment of the last day. But, the moment he passes from this employment to that of a contrary nature, however, he may seem to be exalted, he has really sunk into degradation. We feel this, when ministers of Christ are, by the providence of God, compelled, through affliction, to leave the service of the sanctuary, and fly to worldly occupations. However honest they may be, we feel that these are not the ministry of Christ : but, if the change be made for one that is decidedly *immoral*, the degradation is still worse ; for, to the calamity, are added the guilt and wretchedness of sin. Such, then, is the case before us. The Church of Rome imposes on its ministers a character, which it is sinful to assume ; for, Jesus Christ himself could not have been a priest, but by the appointment of God ; and they are compelled to perform an act which is not only repulsive to reason, but flatly opposed to the word of God.

Both these cases of degradation are verified by the first Canon on the priesthood,—

“Whoever shall affirm, that under the New Testament, there is not a visible and external priesthood ; or that there is no power to offer and consecrate the true body and blood of the Lord, and remit and retain sins, but only the bare office and ministry of preaching the gospel ; or that, those who do not preach, are by no means to be considered priests, —*let him be accursed.*”

Now, I shall just suppose, what I know to be a fact ; that a priest receiving the confessions of a people, offers the sacrifice of the mass on their behalf, and then pronounces their absolution. He then retires to his own apartment : and, while reflecting on what has transpired, he remembers, that Christ alone is our priest, and that his offering on Calvary hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. What will be his feeling ? Will he not feel, that these poor deluded votaries of superstition need more than he has declared to be sufficient for their safety ? Will he not feel, that he has sunk from the high ground, on which the power of God was waiting to confirm his words with mercy given to the instructed supplicants, to that of an impostor, who, taking an office which God had not given him, was now leading the people to trust in what was utterly unable to supply their wants ? Would he not feel the degradation of his assumed office, just in proportion to his moral susceptibility ? His sense of what is right in the sight of God ? Would he not be still more oppressed with this, when called upon to officiate, not only for men before him, but for the deceased, to whom no benefit can result from all his ceremonies on earth ? Such I am convinced

must be the case, wherever a correct view of Scripture is combined with the duties of a priesthood, the office of which is violently seized, and the duties of which, are repugnant alike to reason and to Revelation.

I speak now on the supposition, that a good man may be a priest of Rome: but the case would be worse than this. If he, from reading the Sacred Scriptures were led to supply the necessary knowledge to the people; leading them directly through Christ to God: he then would stand before them in the mass; not only as an impostor, but as an impostor revealed, whose acts were exposed by his own words: or else, if his character in private *commanded* their esteem, they would pity him as the slave of impostors more mighty than himself.

By carefully observing the point before you, an explanation will be given to that anomalous fact, in which we see a Church professing infallibility, and which can never change, yet, assuming on every hand, so different an appearance, that, but for her name, she could often scarcely be recognized: for the Catholics of England would be called Protestants, in Austria; and in other lands. Now the truth is this. The bond of this union is their profit on its masses, and of these, the most productive, the masses for the dead. It is this, therefore, principally, which unites the whole. If there were no purgatory, there would be no papal power; yet, it is not this alone, which cements the compact. As the condition of each country will allow of it, the whole universe is filled with demons and spirits, from which they are to be protected by official rites, not one of which can be performed

without a fee. In the ritual of the Franciscans now used in Austria, which I obtained from a priest of that nation ; there are ceremonies for quelling thunder storms, healing diseases, purging from evil spirits, rivers, fountains, houses, &c., for they are supposed to dwell every where. The vilest ghost tales narrated on the cottage hearth, can never reach the absurdity of their superstitions, and their written prayers soften our abhorrence of the most barbarous heathen rites. The doctrine of demons, which Paul commanded Timothy not to touch, was pure philosophy compared with this. And yet at the present time, may be seen, the solemn form, and face, of this anointed priesthood, raised on an elevation at the corner of some barn, or cow yard, exorcising the rats and mice, from their granaries ; the diseases from their cattle ; the pollution from their water brooks ; the tempests from their hemisphere ; and barrenness from their land. And these, let it be observed, are not the inventions of the people ; but of the priesthood, who profit by them. The prayers are stamped with the authority of Government, and the Pope : and the ceremonies, are performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, if applicable to anything, must be condemning here. Nor does it appear to me, that there is much room for preference in the different methods of their profanity ; because in each case, the same sin is perpetrated. When the country priest uses the beautiful promise, *ask and ye shall receive*, &c., to confirm the belief of this deluded people, in those incantations by which he

is professing to expel mice from a haystack ; and weasels from a wood ; he profanes the word of his Creator ; and when the higher classes of the clergy use the words of Scripture to confirm their demands of absolute power, they do the same. If, in the ceremony which attends the appearance of the Pope, and that of his adoration on the altar, the words of Scripture be used at all, it is altogether an act of desecration ; he can only appear, and be worshipped thus, to verify the features of the man of sin : (2 Thess. ii. 3—13 :) and whatever his displays of earthly grandeur, he participates in the degradation of his lowest clergy ; with all the hosts that serve him, the principal of this rebellious combination, has passed from the dignity which belongs to the advocates of truth ; to the degradation which belongs to the combined, the open, the systematical advocates and disseminators of a lie.

There are, too, in these degradations of the ministry, some things that are earthly—others that are mercenary—and much that is cruel.

I use the word *earthly*, to distinguish some cases, in which the religion of Jesus has been used, by them, not in the worst of purposes ; yet, not according to its spiritual design. Thus Lanfranc led the struggles which terminated in the great Charter of England ; a measure which was only wrong, in having been attained by the barter of religious influence for temporal advantages. Thus, the Pope became a temporal prince, by bartering in the election of Germany, his religious influence, for the estate of Ravenna. This is what has been called in

Sacred Scripture, committing adultery with the princes of the earth.

By the word *mercenary*, I mean something worse. It is using a spiritual influence for the sake of acquiring money. This is another step in her degradation, which may be traced, not only in particular acts, but, in the very construction of her ritual. Heaven, earth, air, sea ; nay, time, and eternity, have been crammed with objects of terror, for the purpose of extracting from an affrighted people, the basest accumulation of gain. Of this cool and deliberate purpose, the indulgences of Leo X. form a most decisive instance : they were given avowedly to replenish his exhausted treasury. The principle is also found in every stage of human existence, drawing with the vehemence of a hungry leech. It is most violent when its victim falls into the deepest calamity. His distress of mind raises the price of his absolution ; and, when extended on the bed of death, he is urged with claims for extreme unction, the legacy to the Church, and the purchase of masses to relieve his soul when baptized in the torments of purgatory.

By the word *cruel*, I intend not only that cold and heartless indifference to human suffering which runs through the whole of this system, (and which, more or less, *always attends the exercise of infidelity in sacred things*,) but that most dreadful purpose, by which the Church of Rome has used her religious influence in giving a bitterness to the art, and a poison to the instruments of war. The standards and swords which, having been consecrated by the Popes, were marked with the

cross ; have been amongst the most barbarous and unrelenting that ever ravaged the surface of this earth. The Papal war of Germany reduced its population, in thirty years, from sixteen to four millions. The wars of Switzerland were exterminating. When the soldiers at the storming of Bezeers, inquired how the Catholics should be distinguished in the carnage from the Protestants, Arnold, an Abbot, then present, replied, " Oh, kill them all—the Lord knoweth them that are his." And it was there, and in this war, that the great forefathers of our own denomination received their terrible baptisms both in blood and fire.

Much has been said respecting the evidence on which these reasonings are founded: it is necessary, therefore, that a word of explanation should be given here. I have principally relied on the decrees of the Council of Trent. These were all drawn up in the defence of Rome. The Protestants were never permitted to enter its assemblies, or to take any part in its discussions. The only difficulty felt there, was, that of reducing the Catholic clergy to a uniform submission under the Roman yoke. The decrees thus formed, in their own defence, are, therefore, the mildest statements of their principles, that could be given ; and, though they have been recorded by different historians, yet these agree in every essential particular ; and, the decrees I have quoted, are, from the first edition published at Rome, in 1564. For many facts and quotations, and the translations of these decrees, I am indebted to the Rev. J. M. Cramp, of Saint Peter's, whose Text-book of Popery is worthy of

particular attention. Besides these, and Sarpi's History of the Council of Trent, there is a most fruitful source of evidence supplied, in those documents of the Roman Church, which relate to the history of its several parties. The regular clergy, were those who presided over the monastic orders, who lived by their several rules : the secular clergy were the pastors, &c. of the different Churches formed of persons in ordinary society : when these had risen to a certain state of prosperity, their interest began to clash with each other. It is in tracing the history of their several contentions, that we find the most terrible exposures of corruption and degradation in the Church of Rome. Each party speaks as an organ of the infallible Church ; and each party exhibits the other as execrable. We do not rest on the authority of Protestant informers ; but yielding to this discordant Church, the *infallibility* that she claims ; and, taking the testimony of her own authorities, we see her exposed in naked shamefulness, and melting like a body that is dead, in an ocean of uncleanness.

One example of this evidence may be taken from the Council of Trent. Pallavicini records, that, the utmost effort was made by the emissaries of the Roman Pontiff, to obtain a positive declaration of his supremacy. The decree that was sent to be passed, is this :—

Whoever shall affirm that blessed Peter was not appointed by Christ the chief of the apostles, and his vicar upon earth ; or, that it is not necessary that there should be in the Church one Pontiff, the successor of Peter, and equal to him in the power of government ; or that his lawful successors in the Roman see from that time to the present, have not possessed the premacy of the Church, and were not the

fathers, pastors, and teachers of all Christians, and that full power to feed, rule, and govern the universal Church was not committed to them by our Lord Jesus Christ ; *let him be accursed.*"

The discussions on this were violent in the extreme. The Cardinal of Lorraine said, that if such a Canon were proposed he would protest against it. The Bishops are Christ's vicars, not the Pope's, said the Archbishop of Grenada, &c. &c. &c. The proposal was finally rejected.

Another proof of this degradation in the Roman clergy is seen in our ancient poetry. When Butler burlesqued the Puritans, with all his virulence, the truth of nature would not allow him to charge them with uncleanness ; but, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, abound in descriptions of gluttony and lust, which must have existed in the Catholic clergy.

Should any one doubt the cruelty of the system, he has only to visit the Lollards' Tower, and the ancient dungeons of the Papal Ecclesiastical Courts ; the relics of sufferings which are left there, prepare us to believe the barbarities of the Inquisition.

Of their political artifice, we can have no greater proof, than that which is supplied in the English restrictions on Mortmain ; these, as they stand on our statute books, have sometimes made me blush to think on the Christian ministry : the Deed on which we hold this Chapel, and every such property, contains an irrefragible proof of all I say.

Lastly, the monastic ruins of our country, present another evidence which nothing can contradict. Before such properties could have been conglomerated, all that history has ever recorded of their mercenary meanness,

must have transpired : and such establishments, could never have been overturned, unless the coarseness of their follies had first destroyed the confidence of society in their pretensions.

I must not indulge my feelings, brethren, or I could weep, to think that my fellow-countrymen, should ever again look back, from the purity and pleasure of gospel mercy and privilege, to the ruinous degradation of this monstrous bondage.

That which relates to the celibacy of the clergy, shall be stated in the words of my authorities. First, we have the fact in the decree of Trent.

Whoever shall affirm, that the conjugal state is to be preferred to a life of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and more conducive to happiness to remain in virginity or celibacy than to be married ; *let him be accursed.*—*Canon X. on Celibacy of Priesthood. Council of Trent.*

In this you will observe, that the terms celibacy and virginity are used as if synonymous ; how far this will hold respecting the Catholic Clergy now, will appear from the following :—

“ I cannot think of the wandering of the friends of my youth without heart-rending pain. One, now no more, whose talents raised him to one of the highest dignities of the Church in Spain, was for many years a model of Christian purity. When by the powerful influence of his mind, and the warmth of his devotion, he had drawn many into the clerical and the religious life, (my sister amongst the latter,) he sunk at once into the grossest and most daring profligacy, &c. &c. Such, more or less has been the fate of my early friends, whose minds and hearts were much above the common standard of the Spanish clergy. What, then, need I say of the vulgar crowd of priests, who, coming, as the Spaniard phrase has it, from the *coarse swaddling clothes*, and raised by ordination to a rank of life for which they are not prepared, mingle vice and superstition, grossness of feeling, and pride of office in their character ? I have known the best among them ; I have heard their

confessions ; I have heard the confessions of young persons of both sexes, who fell under the influences of their suggestions and example ; and I do declare, that nothing can be more dangerous to youthful virtue than their company.” —Cramp, p. 312—*Practical and Internal Evidences against Catholicism*, pp. 132—138.

That this agrees with the state of their clergy in Austria, and Germany, and Poland, I have the most incontestible proof ; while the same is reported of Ireland. But we have one authority, still more worthy of respect. When the Council of Trent was summoned, the place at first chosen for its meeting was Mantua. The Duke would not allow the Council a release from his civil authority. The Pope complained of this, and stated in his letter, as a reason, that *the very concubines of the priests were by the doctors, regarded as under ecclesiastical authority* alone. Considering that, then, some of the highest stations were held in the Church by the illegitimate children of the Popes, this fact speaks for itself, and needs all our pity, but not one word to secure its heavy reprehension.

I have now passed over the grounds defined in the advertisement. I have shown you that the Roman Church has dishonoured, corrupted, and restricted the Sacred Scriptures. That she has forged a mass of unwritten oracles to which she retires, when oppressed by the light of Sacred Scripture. That she has thus corrupted the sacraments of God ; and finally, you have now seen that she has reduced the Christian ministry beneath all ordinary terms of degradation. Here it was my purpose to have closed this theme ; but since they have dared me, by circulating their tracts through the congregation,

it is due to our youth, that I address you on the demoralizing tactics of the Roman Church. This, then, I shall do, *Deo volente*, next Lord's day evening; and, afterwards I shall continue these Lectures on Popery in England, so as to include the Canons of Trent on Justification.

Meanwhile, my brethren, may God the Holy Spirit guide us into all the truth: and so impart his influence to mankind, that *his* Priests may be clothed with righteousness: and, that his saints may shout aloud for joy. Amen.

LECTURE V.

ON THE DEMORALIZING TACTICS OF ROME.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say.—1 Cor. x. 14, 15.

IN this passage the apostle has been using the example of the ancient Jewish Church as a means of admonishing that of the Corinthians. Between these two worshipping assemblies there were some circumstantial differences ; but, they had so many things in common, that, the things which happened to the one, became examples to the other. The Jews were led to exercise faith, in the Messiah who should come, and it may, therefore, be called prospective ; the Corinthians believed in a Saviour who had come, and their faith was, therefore, retrospective ; but, notwithstanding this difference, combined with others of a circumstantial nature, they were both enriched with mercy ; and, from the same source ; and, through the same Messiah ; and, the inheritance of their mercies was, in each case, combined with the same responsibility to God.

Hence, the use which is here made of those afflictive disciplines to which the children of Israel were subjected. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted."

Possessed of the same nature, and answerable for their conduct to the same God, the apostle viewed them as exposed to the same temptations ; and, liable to fall into the same ruin. If, at present, they were innocent from the great transgression : yet, “ Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” The sins which stained the society of Israel might all revive in the Corinthian Church. If the Jews were idolaters, it was possible that the Corinthians might be idolaters too. If those committed fornication, so might these also : if the one provoked their Christ, the other might fall into the same sin : if the first murmured, the second had reason to beware of secret discontent. There was nothing in the Christian Church to prevent the possibility of falling into the same offences ; and, by the same offences, into the same ruin. “ Wherefore,” with fatherly solicitude he exclaims, “ wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry, I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say.”

We must not regard the admonition as though it were pointed at idolatry alone : it applies to idolatry with all the other sins associated with it : and, in reference to all, the admonition forbids, not only the gross act, but any approach to the offence. It bound them to avoid the appearance of the evil, and the influences which led to its perpetration. In the spirit of his address the apostle displays a mild, a dignified, but deep affection. Nothing can be more respectful. He invites them as wise men to judge the propriety of his words. Yet nothing can be more decided. He not only condemns idolatry, but commands them to flee from it, so

that his instructions would be violated not merely by committing the crime but also by an inward longing for it; and even, by a cold and sluggish reluctance in forsaking it.

Moreover, the reason for the injunction is just as clear as its import. A desire to approach any known sin, involves, all the moral guilt of its perpetration. Through the weakness of our nature, and the limitation of our faculties, we are obliged to judge of men only, or principally, according to their actions: but God seeth the heart. In his sight the man who thirsts for revenge, though unable to accomplish his desire, is a murderer; and, he who loves to cherish his lust, though he have no opportunity of gratifying it, is an adulterer. The law of God goes even further than this. It not only condemns him who *thirsts* for revenge, and him who *cherishes* his lust; it denounces also all who do not hate and flee away from them. Holiness involves an abhorrence of sin: and all the holy shun it with deep aversion. All that is necessary to complete the case, and justify the judgment, is, first, that the culprit should have known the thing to be wrong; and then, that he did not *flee* from it. He then falls under the weight of this apostolical reprehension, I might rather say, under that of the eternal God.

Here, therefore, without any forcing of evidence, our charge may be sustained against the Church of Rome. Her advocates may take their own ground. The Bishops, whose declaration has been circulated through our congregation, may speak for themselves. For, why is it that they write their tract in this defensive form?

they are not persecuted here. They have all the rights of citizens granted to them now. If they had not perfect religious liberty, how could they have made this aggressive movement in our own assembly? still, with all their present advantages, every statement is explanatory and defensive. They say, we do *not* commit idolatry in the worship of images and saints—we do not exceed our commission in regulating the use of Scripture—we do *not* forgive sins—we are taught to abhor massacres, persecutions, and other such flagitious cruelties—we have *but one* Saviour, Jesus Christ. Why is it, I ask, that all these things are so plaintively renounced? They reply—why we are charged with them by our enemies, and we know that they are wrong. Let this then be admitted—The Catholic Church knows that idolatry, the corruption of Scripture, the mercenary forgiving of sins for money, persecution, and the trusting in the mass and sacraments, instead of the Saviour's atonement are all wrong. She knows that they are wrong, and she anathematizes all who hold them. But, why is it, that, in disavowing these errors, these advocates of Rome are obliged to fill their pages with explanatory and modifying words, and phrases, so as almost to exhaust the resources of the language we speak? Why is it, I say, that in almost every case the error cannot be renounced without a modifying phrase, or some subtle explanation? The answer must be plain—they know these things to be wrong and yet they have approached so nearly to them that they must explain, and with subtlety too, before they can dare to deny the charge.

When an individual complains that he is slandered,

two questions have to be determined—first, whether he be really guilty of the charge brought against him: and then, whether the charge has not originated with himself: for, if he be really innocent of the chief offence, and yet has artfully, or carelessly placed himself in such situations that suspicion was inevitable; if he has continued in them against all remonstrance: if, when suspected of circulating a base and illegal coinage, he resolves to be always bearing it about on his person; and, to be ever showing it: though he might still deny that, he has succeeded in passing it, yet he never can complain of slander when he is charged with the intention. He has adhered to the appearance of evil, so tenaciously, that no one can acquit him of entertaining a love for it. He may say what he please, all his actions and habits testify against him. Such, then, is the case with this Roman community. Its leaders say that idolatry is sin, and they know it to be so: yet they bow before the host—they pray to saints—they kneel before images, crucifixes, and relics: they approach so nearly to the sin that no human eye can see the difference, that they themselves are scarcely able to define the difference in words. They do not avoid the appearance of evil; but they cleave to it with an infatuated tenacity. They do not flee from idolatry, but they come as near to it in all their worship, as ever the judgments of men, and of Jehovah will allow, supposing, therefore, that by a subtle distinction, they might seem to avoid the conviction of the gross offence; their obstinate love of what appears to be idolatry must render them guilty in the sight of God.

I am meeting the authors of these pamphlets, you perceive, on the very ground they have there taken. From the pamphlets themselves, we learn, first, that idolatry is sin ; and, secondly, that in every part of their worship, they approach so near to idolatry, that they themselves are scarcely able to define the difference. We learn here, that it is wrong to forgive sins without repentance ; and yet they seem to forgive sins without repentance, and for money. They say, that man cannot forgive sins at all ; and, again, they say, that the priest can forgive sins by administering the sacraments. They say, that it is unsafe, and sinful, to rely on anything for salvation but Christ alone ; and yet, the mass is essential to salvation. They say, that the body and blood of Christ is in the host ; and they bow before it, as though the host were Christ ; and yet they do not worship the host. I do not say one word now about the accuracy of these distinctions ; but I say, this tremendous approximation to what they confess to be wrong ; this firm and obstinate adherence to the form and appearance of evil is condemned in the word, and by the law of God. If Divine authority demand any respect whatever, this must be reprehensible in every part of human affairs ; but, most of all, when brought into his sanctuary, and mingled with his worship ; and those who thus complain of being misrepresented, ought to remember, that men who love to be ever saying what *seems* to be untrue, must in the end, and not unjustly, be regarded as wishing to deceive.

Moreover, in this case, there is one feature which gives it a deep solemnity. In the worship of God, and in the

appropriation of our Lord Jesus Christ, all the salvation of the soul is involved. On their own showing, the sin of idolatry, and the neglect of Christ, would be fatal to the hopes of eternity in every individual. Now, the soul of a poor and ignorant man is as precious as that of one who is learned. But it requires much learning to distinguish between the sins they repudiate, and the actions they encourage and enjoin. If they could, themselves, always realize the difference between the bowing before an image, and praying before it, from real worship which is due to God alone; yet, what must be the result of this terrible approximation to damning sin, in all the millions of their worshippers, whom they love to keep in the lowest state of ignorance, without Bibles, without any corrective provision whatever? These all appear like victims who have been first blinded, and then led by deceitful guides to the crumbling verges of a dreadful precipice, to be left there in naked destitution; or else, to be tortured by fiendish flagellations, which urge them to activity, though every movement thus produced in their unnatural darkness, is hazardous and pitiable, as those of an excited maniac, who is dancing on the verges of perdition.

What are the real consequences of this delusive treatment, remains to be explained, when the mystery of iniquity, with its baseness and results, are revealed in the light of eternity; for, from us, in this earthly state, it must, for the most part, be concealed. Here, enough of its effects are known to make every compassionate soul abhor it; but the fruits of the delusion are, principally, reaped in hell. My object, therefore, is not to

descend the precipice, and describe the mangled ruins of those that perish by it ; but to show the path by which its victims are led to their destruction, and the arts by which they are deluded along this road to death. It is, I confess, a melancholy task ; but it is one that has been imposed on me by the temerity and exultation of our adversaries.

Far be it from us, however, to participate in their unholy feeling. We have no spirit of defiance. We hope in God, that this labour shall not be in vain ; but we have seen too much of the delirious infatuation produced by the mixture in her cup, not to know, that unless the Lord Jehovah should exert a more than miraculous agency, this mother of abominations, will, yet have many victims over whom she may exhibit her unnatural exultations. We are not, I fear, sufficiently imbued with "*the love of the truth,*" to withstand, successfully, in every case, the force of her various artifices ; yet God has promised not to withhold his grace, and thereby some may be rescued, when the artifices have been exposed. But, notwithstanding this, dear as that hope may be, it is not possible that all the artifices of Rome should be traced, in one discourse ; for they issue from the centre of her power, and spread like corded net-work over all the surface of this globe. They enter, and permeate, the masses of mankind as the fibres of our nerves mingle with all the organs of our bodily constitution. Its morbid anatomy, would be a work for ages ; and then require a devotion of the ripest and most penetrating genius. I shall not, therefore, attempt so much ; but first, *defining that principle in*

our nature on which they seize, I shall then show the artifice by which, in these tracts, they turn its operation to their purpose.

And first of all—the principle of our nature on which they seize, is, that by which we are led to combine the hope of forgiveness, with a love of sin, or a neglect of inward piety. She has no aversion to the *form* of godliness, and to this our fallen nature is inclined; but, her objection lies directly against the *power* of godliness; and, to this she finds our nature disinclined. But conscience will not let us rest in this condition: it demands the power of godliness. The word of God will never suffer us to rest in this condition, it also constantly demands the power of godliness. By it we are continually warned, that to be without God, is to be without hope. Conscience, therefore, and the word of God, are constantly calling us away, not only from outward scenes of profligacy, and habits of lightness and indifference, but also from all reliance on the outward form of godliness, to self-denying culture of inward faith and piety. Here the great warfare is maintained between man and his Creator; and it is here that the demand of the Creator is renewed, in all the distinctness of a new birth, and with all the completeness of a new creation, both in judgment and in mercy. The point, and gist of our rebellion with God, then, consists in an effort to evade this claim to a perfect renovation of our nature: and, the great artifice of Popery, is, by interposing her ministrations, to encourage the evasion of this claim, and to build up the hope of happiness without it. By corrupting, and withholding the Sacred Scriptures, she

obscures both its nature and the Divine requirement. By forging her unwritten oracles, she invents a multitude of follies, that may take the place of it ; that may occupy the place, in our esteem, which should be held by vital godliness alone. She corrupts the Sacraments of Christ ; and, partly by dressing them in fooleries, but partly, by changing their intention, she exhibits them as *substitutes* for inward piety : of which, they were intended by our Lord, to be the *signs*, and instruments of the cultivation. She thus promises to the baptised rebels, the blessings which can be enjoyed by the friends of God alone. The Sacraments are thus made a means of consecrating practical ungodliness. The force of this delusion is increased by the deep degradation of her ministry. To these, she consigns a personal share in the produce of her frauds ; but, for this, they must abandon all love for truth, all pity for mankind, and every faithful consideration of the claims of God on the worship of our hearts. By shaving off their hair, and greasing them with oil in the name of God, she invests them with apostolical power. Thus she originates a compacted and organised agency, whose living, intelligent, and trained activities, are always at her command. By their combination, and the use of her confessional, she adapts her inventions to all the peculiarities of individual minds. She knows that it is easier for our fallen race to unite in another compact of rebellion, than it is to submit the heart to God ; and, therefore, her votaries are all united and combined in this, on *her* promise of eternal life : but, since she must have submission, she presses the terrors of conscience on her

side, and issues her commands in the name of God : and, the price of all her promises, is an absolute submission to herself. She thus improves upon the example of the eastern prophet ; for, as Mahomet, by corrupting the old Testament, forged a traditionary right, through which he claimed submission to his throne ; so Papal Rome, corrupting both the testaments of grace, has forged a traditionary right on which she claims submission to her rule. In both cases, the requirement was the same—the submission of man to man—and, in both cases, the result was identical, for they cherished the hopes of eternal life without any conformity to the will of God.

This, then, is the abstract principle of sin, and the artifice of Rome consists in giving it a religious form. She requires every man to submit to her rule ; but then, she allows him to combine with all his hopes, this element of all rebellion.

But, I seem to hear you asking me, my brethren, if by this community of Rome, the heart of man is freed from *its* submission to God, why then may not the *hands* be also freed ? If the devotee be liberated from the *power* of godliness, why may he not be liberated also from the *form* of godliness ?

The reply to this question, will place before you that which I stated as the second part of my discourse. For, first, the conscience of man will not let him rest without some form of godliness ; and, secondly, without the profits which result from her forms of worship, Rome would have no motive for requiring our subjection to her power. If there were no mass, there would be no Pope, for it is from the profits of the mass, that he, and all

the priesthood, principally, gain their pecuniary advantage.

Now, the arts exhibited in these tracts, are, principally, directed to this one point. They are plausible apologies for the ceremonies and practices of the Romish Church. When they have propounded their claim to the entire submission which they exact, they are, first, met with the suspicion that it is unnecessary. To the inquiry, why must I submit my reason and conscience to you? They reply, we are the true Church; and, there can be no salvation out of the true Church. Thus, they take hold of that elementary fear which makes man a religious animal. They build their fraud, not on the ordinary principles of deception, but on that by which we are prepared for eternity. The end they propose, is identical, with that which is sought in every other system of fraud. Those who get rich by quackery in medicine, evade the principles of science, and the claims of benevolence, that, appealing to the fear of disease and death, they may vend their nostrums with pecuniary advantage. The robber, on the high-way, seizes with open turpitude, what he desires; but, others, not so bold, and depending less on physical strength, conceal their intentions until their object has been gained by the consent of their victim. The quack in medicine attains this, by appealing to the fear of death, and bodily suffering; but the quack in religion attains his purpose, by appealing to the fear of hell; and the sufferings of conscience. His nostrums are intended to cure not the body, but the soul. The medical deceiver says—submit to me, and to my treatment; and, notwith-

standing all the results of science, and experience, I will secure your life and health ; in defiance of nature ; however, you may provoke her by your daily imprudence. The religious deceiver says, submit to me, and to my treatment ; regard whatever I say as true ; and all that I do as right ; and, despite of all that reason and experience can say, with all the confirmations and truths of Scripture, your conscience shall be healed : and hell shall be avoided : whatever the fault or folly of your lives. In both cases, also, there is a similar claim to infallibility, and individual importance. The medical impostor can cure what no other physician can relieve ; and he demands a reliance on this ostentatious claim, until his victim is dead ; but the religious impostor affirms his exclusive infallibility in stronger terms, demanding the confidence of *his* victim until the soul is damned.

Let me entreat your attention to one other point in this example. The impostor in medicine derives no immediate advantage from the death of his patient ; all his gain results from the sale of his medicine : and so, in the other case, the impostor in religion derives no immediate advantage from the ruin of his worshippers, his gains are accumulated by the sale of his masses for the living and the dead ; by his indulgences, by his various exactions, either made in the form of law, or enforced by appeals to superstitious fears. It is on these *intermediates* that he feeds : and, his cruelty appears, in the cold indifference with which he despises the ruinous result in his victim : while he, pertinaciously adheres to his pecuniary profit from the means which inevitably produce it.

It is precisely here that the artifices employed in these tracts originate. When the worship of images, of the

host, and of the saints, the pilgrimages, the confessional, and the indulgences; the corrupted sacraments, and the Papal claims, are presented to our Bible reading community; there is something in them all, which *seems*, at least, to be opposed to the commandments of God. They seem like idolatry, self-righteousness, and consecrated ungodliness. If these were left naked, as they stand in the view of a less instructed people, the most superficial student of the Sacred Scriptures, must be shocked at them. Hence proceeds, the subtlety of these tracts. They are intended to garnish, with plausibility, those monstrous inventions which they exhibit for sale. By these, the advocates of Popery would loosen our attachment to *the truth of God*: and sweeten the substitutes which they prescribe: and entice their victims along the first, and most gentle declivity: until, having brought them to the dark and crumbling verges of the precipice, the Priest, in his confessional, may force them to the ruinous degradation he desires to perfect.

We shall now present to you one or two of those demoralizing artifices by which, the Church of Rome, labours to secure this border land of plausibility; and, across which, her victims are constantly deluded; and the first that I shall notice, is, *that of using words in a double sense, so that, the idea conveyed becomes essentially different from that which they entertain*. Of this, we find several striking, and gross examples in the tract entitled: —“A Touch-stone for the new Religion.” It is, I suppose, a feeble attempt to imitate, those severe, but just rebukes, which the Catholics have received in the very words of their Douay version of Scripture. From these, it has been frequently shown, that, no translation of

Scripture can be made, even by themselves, which, not only will not support ; but, which will not fully condemn the system they advocate. Hence, feeling the violence of this weapon in their own case, they have hoped to use it against us, in acting on the ignorant, and unwary, through this most impudent appeal to the Protestant Scriptures. I call it impudent, because they have not only used the words in this equivocal sense ; but, when taxed with the misapplications of Scripture which are found therein, one who has attended these services, actually took his refuge, and made his retreat into this equivocation. This is, not only grossly immoral, it is most pitiously weak. Such men, surely, must have resigned *their* private judgment to their Church, before they could venture to cast such vile perversions of the sacred page through this assembly. Did the men suppose that we also had resigned the privilege of examining what we read ? Or, that we were prepared to believe that whatever was stated by the instruments of Rome, must, *from her infallibility*, be *true* ?—But, let us look at the cases before me.

It cannot be concealed either from you, or from them, that we regard the Church of Christ, as an assembly of believing people ; who, having been converted to God, are, faithfully following the Saviour whithersoever he leads. The Church of Rome, uses the word Church, in another sense. By it she means, all who have been the recipients of her Sacraments, and adhere to her worship. The fact of individual conversion to God, is by us regarded indispensable ; by them, as of no importance. It is not learning, and obeying, that makes men Christians

in their esteem, but simply being baptised and submitting to the Church. Now, passing by this difference in the meaning of words, they impudently affirm, that we, contrary to our own Scriptures, deny that Christ is ever with his Church.—That we say, there was no Church before the Reformation,—that we say, the Church is not the pillar and ground of the truth,—and that the Spirit is not in the Church,—that the covenant of grace and peace is not with the Church,—and that it is not necessary to embrace the faith of the Church. In all these cases, the play upon these different meanings given to the word Church, is *foul*. We do believe that Christ is with his Church, and that he never will forsake her ; that she is a pillar and ground of the truth,—that the covenant of peace is with her,—that the Holy Spirit is with her, her teacher, and comforter, and sanctifier,—and that her faith is the only way to salvation : but, we also believe that this community of Rome is not a Church of Christ. She has dishonoured his word—committed forgery in his name—corrupted his sacraments—and debased his ministry ; we, therefore, cannot believe that she has the covenant of peace : or that the Holy Spirit is in her, or that her faith, which is all absurdity, can be essential to the salvation of mankind.

I will not rebuke the duplicity of this manœuvre as it deserves, but give you another case. In my last lecture, (on the ministry) I showed you that, as each member of the Church must be a converted man ; so, each minister of Christ must be eminent for his piety amongst converted men. But the Church of Rome says, that, the man whose head was shaved, and greased with

oil in the name of God, by one of their Bishops, in the ceremony of ordination, is, whatever his character, a successor of the holy apostles; and that, though he be living in mortal sin, it may be in adultery, or a murderer; for, *drunkenness is not by their law a mortal sin*, yet, his ordination is irreversible, and his administration of the sacraments cannot be impeached. Thus it was decreed in the Council of Trent. Here, therefore, again, they pass by this difference in the meaning of words and affirm that, "Protestants will not allow that there is any necessity of adhering to the pastors and teachers of the Church." This is totally false. We do allow that a necessity exists for adhering, according to God's word, both to the pastors and teachers of the Church; and nothing more is needful to confirm this, than the subtlety of their aggressive errors; but, we do not believe, that these anointed deceivers can be the true successors of the apostles. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. If the Clergy of Rome claim any relation to the apostles, it must be to Judas, who has gone unto his own place. We, therefore, cannot believe that men are bound to submit under their thralldom, or that any good can result from following their hallucinations.

Heresy, is a wilful contempt and resistance of the truth; this forms the most striking feature of the Romish Church: and, although in reprehending it, we dare not imitate the curses she has uttered against the Divine doctrines, it is not true, that we regard it with indifference. A contempt of truth, such as Rome imposes, and moulds into the elements of her faith; is

guilty in itself, and utterly inconsistent with the hope of salvation.

Honesty required, that the writer of this tract should have distinguished between the unavoidable mistake of one who loves the truth : and a wilful love of error, because of its earthly advantages. But I have before me a still worse case of prevarication. They say, that they have one Saviour, and only one, and that this is Christ ; but, they ought also to have said, that this Christ, is the wafer received in the mass ; or the host which is elevated on their altar. To say, that we dishonour our Redeemer is false : and it is equally untrue, that they do not worship the host : when they bow down before it, as though it were the person of our Redeemer.

I will not press them with the absurdity that appears in many of their distinctions, but this I say, that when complaining of misrepresentation, and stating their own sentiments ; honesty required, that these Bishops and advocates of Rome, should have used words in their ordinary sense ; but, this is explained by a living witness : “ the Church of Rome does not teach her faith by books, but by her priests,” these, therefore, are only intended to smooth the way to her confessional ; there she will explain her words in other senses ; and follow these with other distinctions ; as to her faith, she will resign what is necessary to be resigned ; and modify all that is enforced, to the knowledge and habits of her victims ; yes, all things will be made either plausible, or indifferent ; her satisfaction results, not from the creed, or the character of her disciples ; but, from their subjec-

tion to her authority; and from the price at which she sells them, her impure ministrations.

The second artifice is that of withholding in their statements a part of their real meaning until the learner is prepared, either to receive, or to connive at it. In some instances, the reservation is never taught at all; and thus, the catechism, school-books, and books of instruction in one country; will not be the same as those employed in another. A priest officiating in England, must deny; what, if removed to an office in Spain, he must enforce as essential to salvation. Hence, in the tracts before me, there are statements which are true, but, which *do not contain all the truth*; which do not contain all the truth which *honesty* required them, in such a case, to have avowed.

To verify this remark, you must allow me to adhere, as I have done, to their most accredited documents, in order that the deficiency I complain of, may be supplied in *their own words*.

First, in the "true principles," &c. we have these words,

"We honour indeed the blessed Virgin, the mother of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, but not as a goddess, nor with any part of Divine worship."

Supposing this, in any sense, to be true, it is not the whole truth. For, what do they mean by saying, "*we honour the Blessed Virgin*?" An answer is found in the Catholic school-book, page 159—161.

"If you will be a true child, and a sincere servant of the blessed Virgin, you must be careful to perform four things:—1. Have a great apprehension of displeasing her by mortal sin, and of afflicting her motherly heart by dishonouring

her son, and destroying your soul ; and if you chance to fall into that misfortune, have recourse readily to her, that *she may be your intercessor in recommending you to her son*, whom you have extremely provoked. 2. Love and imitate her virtues, principally her humility and chastity. 3. Have recourse to her in all your spiritual necessities ; and for that end, offer to her daily some particular prayers. 4. Be mindful to invoke her in temptations, and in the dangers you find yourself in of offending God, you cannot show your respect better than by applying yourself to her in these urgent necessities, and you can find *no succour more ready and favourable than her's*. If you perform this, you will have a true devotion to the blessed virgin, you will be of the number of her real children, and she will be your mother, under whose protection *you shall never perish*."

Observe, also, the prayer of St. Bernard.

"Remember, O most holy Virgin Mary, that no one ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your mediation, without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in your goodness, behold me a penitent sinner sighing out my sins before you, beseeching you to adopt me for your son, and to take upon you the care of my eternal salvation. Despise not, O Mother of Jesus, the petition of your humble client, but hear and grant my prayer."

This was the prayer of one, who founded not less than 160 monasteries. I have also before me the "Litany of our Lady of Loretta." In it, we find one prayer to God the Father—one to the Holy Spirit—eleven to our Lord Jesus the Christ—and *forty-five* to the Virgin Mary. Moreover—

"The present Pope, Gregory XVI, has shown his signal attachment to the Virgin, in his Encyclical Letter, addressed to the prelates of the Romish Church in 1832, shortly after his assumption of the pontifical dignity. In the beginning of the letter, his Holiness observes, "We select for the date of our letter this most joyful day, (Aug. 15,) on which we celebrate the solemn festival of the most blessed Virgin's triumphant assumption into heaven, that she who has been through every great calamity, our patroness, may watch over us, writing to you, and lead our mind by her heavenly

influence to those counsels which may prove most salutary to Christ's flock." The closing paragraph contains the following sentences:—"But that all may have a successful and happy issue, let us raise our eyes to the most blessed Virgin Mary, who alone destroys heresies, who is our greatest hope, *yea, the entire ground of our hope*, may she exert her patronage to draw down an efficacious blessing on our desires our plans, and our proceedings, in the present straitened, condition of the Lord's flock."

If this comment be read in conjunction with the statement of the tract, it will be clearly seen, that the artifice which avoids a direct contradiction is such as gives increasing guiltiness to the intended deception.

Again, in the very next sentence, "We honour, the angels and saints of God, as his servants." Allowing this to be in any sense true, it is not the whole that ought to be stated. How do you honour the saints and angels? An answer is given by the Council of Trent, in the decrees relating to the Mass, Chap. III.

"Although the Church is accustomed to celebrate sometimes certain masses in honour and memory of the saints, nevertheless, it teaches that sacrifice is not offered to them, but to God only, who has crowned them with glory: whence the priest does not say, I offer sacrifice to thee, Peter, or Paul; but, giving thanks to God for their victories, he implores their patronages that they whom we commemorate on earth may vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven."

Now, first, let this specious statement be compared with the following authorised prayers of the Church of Rome.

"Receive, O holy Trinity; this oblation which we make to thee in memory of the passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in honour of the blessed Mary, ever a virgin, of blessed John Baptist the holy apostle, Peter and Paul, and of all the saints, that it may be available to their honour and our salvation; and may they

vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven, whose memory we celebrate on earth, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.”—*Ordinary of the Mass.*

Here Christ is offered to the honour of these saints, and, again, to the same purpose—

“May the intercession, we beseech thee, O Lord, of Bishop Peter, thy apostle, render the prayers and offerings of thy Church acceptable to thee; that the mysteries we celebrate in his honour, may obtain for us the pardon of our sins.”

The intercession of *Peter, not of Christ*, and further,

“Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings of thy people by the prayers of Paul thy apostle? that what is acceptable to thee, because by thee instituted, may become still more acceptable by his intercession.”—*Brevian, Jan. 18. the Feast of St. Peter’s chair at Rome.*

“The ‘offering’ is Christ himself, and the prayer is that the Redeemer’s sacrifice may avail to procure pardon through the intercession of Peter and Paul, Christ himself offered in honour of a saint. Is not this setting the servant above the Lord? Is it less than blasphemy.”—*Cramp.*

“The Canon of the mass is ‘the most sacred and solemn part of this Divine service, which is read with a low voice, as well to express the silence of Christ in his passion, and his hiding at that time his glory and his divinity, as to signify the vast importance of that common cause of all mankind, which the priest is then representing, as it were, in secret, to the ear of God, and the reverence and awe with which both priest and people ought to assist at these tremendous mysteries.”—*Garden of the Soul*, p. 83.

Might I not rather say, my brethren, these tremendous idolatries? But further in the same paragraph:—

“We honour his priests, his Churches, his altars, his word, &c.; and such also is the veneration we have for the cross, &c. &c.”

Here integrity required that they should have been more explicit. In the Catechism of Feasts and Fasts, it is said,

“We pay them (relics) *relative* honour.” Question. “What do you mean by *relative* honour?”—Answer. “I mean such an honour as we give to material Churches or to books of Scripture,” &c. “What then are the things which are thus honoured as the “*books of Scripture*?”

We have a reply to this from a Catholic, describing the relics in the escurial in Spain; there are here eleven thousand relics.

“We shall first begin with the relics of our Saviour, who as he gave himself to us, left us some of his precious jewels, which are incomparable and divine.

“A sacred hair of his most holy head or beard is preserved here with the *utmost* veneration, in a precious vase; and opportunity can never offer us a better hair to *obtain glory by*.

“Several pieces of his most holy cross, all admirably garnished with gold, silver, and jewels, especially that which is *adored* on Good Friday.

“Thirteen thorns out of his crown, which pierce the soul with their points, when we consider them as in the delicate temples of that most loving king of glory.

“Some pieces of the column to which he was bound, and of the manger in which he was born to die for us; which invite hearts to break in pieces through compassion and gratitude.

“In the second place, are the relics of his most holy mother which gladden the hearts of those who seriously consider their incomparable value. Three or four pieces of the habit which adorned that most pure and virginal body in which was formed that of Jesus Christ our Lord, her Son, are placed in one case; also a piece of the handkerchief with which she wiped her eyes, at the foot of the cross, when those tears, as precious as the gems of Aurora, joining themselves with the rubies of the western sun, incorporated themselves with the treasures of our redemption.

“Besides these, we possess a hair, which may be suspected to be that which, flowing down her neck, enamoured her spouse.

“We possess also a thigh of the glorious martyr, Saint Lawrence; it is entire, * * *.”

My brethren, the remainder is too gross for me to read, although by this impure Church, not regarded too indelicate for female contemplation in the place of prayer.*

“ They show at Rome the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul encased in silver busts, set with jewels ; a lock of the Virgn Mary’s hair, a phial of her tears, and a piece of her green petticoat, a robe of Jesus Christ, sprinkled with his blood, some drops of his blood in a bottle, some of the water which flowed out of his side, some of the sponge, a large piece of the cross, all the nails used in the crucifixion ; a piece of the stone of the sepulchre on which the angel sat ; the identical porphyry pillar on which the cock perched when he crowed, after Peter denied Christ ; the rods of Moses and Aaron ; and two pieces of the wood of the real ark of the covenant !—*Rome in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. pp. 234—289.”

Honesty required the avowal that these have been, and are, the absurdities which this Church regards with equal veneration to that she pays “ the Books of Scripture,” as means of conversing with God.

Again, from the seventh article of the same tract—

“ As to the blessed Eucharist, we believe it to be both a sacrament and sacrifice. In this sacrament and sacrifice, we adore not the bread and wine which would indeed be a most stupid idolatry, &c.

The whole of this paragraph is much more plain from the following which ought never to be concealed.

* Lest my censure should seem too severe, the remainder is here supplied—“ but, the hair is singed ; the holes which were made in it by the prongs which turned him on the grid-iron, are very visible—one of this saint’s feet : the toes are entire, though contracted : between two of them is a small cinder, which, in the eye of piety, shines like a carbuncle.”

It is the prayer presented at the oblation of the host :

“Accept, O Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal God, this unspotted host, which I thy unworthy servant offer unto thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences, and for all here present ; as also for all faithful Christians, both *living* and *dead*, that it may avail both me and them to life everlasting. Amen.”
Ordinary of the Mass.

Notwithstanding all their prevarication, it is plain from this, that (“*this unspotted host*”) in the mass, is placed where Jesus Christ alone can stand : and this being the great instrument of their pecuniary accumulations, forms the key and corner stone of all their system.

Once more, though I dread being tedious—In article the fifth, of the same—

“We believe, that the indulgences granted in our Church are neither dispensations to commit sin, nor pardon for sins to come, but only a remission of the temporal punishments due to our sins.”

They ought here to have stated, what is the difference between the forgiving of sins and the remission of their punishments. For, in the Catechism, we have these words.

“Can priests forgive sins ? Answer—Yes, they can ; for they have received that power from our Lord Jesus Christ.”

And this is made more plain by an example.

“The Pope has established eight or ten days in the year, in which every Spaniard, (for the grant is confined to Spain,) by kneeling at five different altars, and there praying for the extirpation of heresy, is entitled to send a species of *habeas animam* writ to any of his friends in purgatory ; the name of the person whose liberation is intended, should, for fear of mistake, be mentioned in the prayers. But, lest

the order of release should find him already free, or perhaps within those gates to which no Pope had ever ventured to apply his keys, we are taught to endorse the spiritual bill with other names, addressing it finally to the most worthy and disconsolate." "These privileged days are announced to the public by a printed notice placed over the basin of holy water, which stands near every Church-door. The words written on the tablet, are plain and peremptory; '*Hoy se saca anima* ; literally, this is a soul-drawing day.' " *Doblado's Letters from Spain*, pp. 169—174.

"With respect to the City of Rome, you may buy as many masses as will free your soul from purgatory for 29,000 years, at a Church of St. John Lateran, on the festa of that saint; at St. Bibicana, on All Soul's Day, for 7000 years; at a Church near the Basilica of St. Paul, and at another on the Quirinal Hill, for 10,000 and for 3000 years, and at a very reasonable rate. But it is in vain to particularize: for the greater part of the principal Churches in Rome and the neighbourhood are spiritual shops for the sale of the same commodity."—*Rome in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. pp. 267-270.

"At Tivoli," says a modern traveller, "a man was pointed out to us who had stabbed his brother, who died in agonies within an hour. The murderer went to Rome, purchased his pardon from the Church, and received a written protection from a Cardinal, in consequence of which, he was walking about unconcernedly, a second Cain, whose life was sacred."—*Graham's Three Months' Residence in the Mountains, East of Rome*, p. 34.

Again,

"Those that have interest with the Pope, may obtain an absolution in full from his holiness for all the sins they ever have committed, or may choose to commit.

"I have seen one of these edifying documents, signed by the present Pope to a friend of mine. It was most unequivocally worded."—*Rome in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. p. 171.

With these facts before us, it seems, as if more than common impudence were required, when the advocates of Rome in this country declare that her absolution is never given, but on the sincere repentance of the criminal; and, besides, what is the forgiveness of sins but the remission of its punishment?

Lastly, in article the third of this tract, it is said,

“And if we also receive unwritten traditions, as part of the word of God, we mean no other traditions but such as are Divine, and which we believe to be Divine, by the same authority by which we believe the Scriptures.”

After what I have said on the assumption of unwritten oracles (Lecture II.) it is only necessary for me to remark now, that they ought to have stated, that this authority was none other than the decree of their Church given through its rulers. It ought also to have been stated, what those traditions are, which they thus receive: that some consist of whole books which are known not to *have been inspired*—others, are directly opposed to the oracles they declare to have been inspired; and their Breviary teems with cases of which the following are examples:—

“Saint Francis Xavier turned a sufficient quantity of salt water into fresh, to save the lives of five hundred travellers, who were dying of thirst, enough being left to allow a large exportation to different parts of the world, where it performed astonishing cures.” “And Saint Raymond de Pennefort, laid his cloak on the sea, and sailed thereon, from Majorca to Barcelona, a distance of one hundred and sixty miles, in six hours.”

Let these affirmations be placed beside the miracles of our Lord; and, then, let any one exercising common sense say, whether anything but gross profanity could

affirm that this report of Saint Xavier, and the changing of water into wine at Cana; with that voyage of Saint Raymond on his cloak, and the Redeemer's walking on the sea; ought to be received with the same reverence, and, on the same authority, *as parts of the word of God*.

My brethren, it is sickening to descend into these particulars, for the farther we press our investigation, the worse the case appears. I have only raised the corner of its pall, that you may see the corruption of the carcass that lies beneath it. If these errors had been merely the result of ignorance, which could not be avoided, I would have passed them gently as a common misfortune; or, if the folly of disguising and defending them, had been confined to earthly things, I would not have passed from my proper sphere for their reprehension. But by these, their authors have corrupted the words and worship of the eternal God; poisoned the fountain of everlasting life; dishonoured the person of my Redeemer; frustrated his purposes of mercy; and, as far as in them lies, closed against them who are ready to perish, the only door of hope. And, when they have cast the seeds of their pollution about the enclosure of our sanctuary; to delude, and corrupt, the objects of my affection and care—obedience to God, and charity for men, alike, require; that the grossness of their artifice, and the pollution of their errors, should be exposed for the safety of others.

III. I must now, though with great brevity, observe, that even still greater injury is done to true religion, by their warping the word of God to their corrupt appoint-

ments—Transubstantiation—the Supremacy of the Pope—Indulgences—Purgatory—and the Restriction of Scripture, are all modern inventions. For these, therefore, in particular, confirmation is sought in Scripture. The most difficult passages are always selected; and these are invariably interpreted wrongly. The supremacy of the Pope is a case in point. In the Council of Nice, decree seventh, the fathers assigned the principal honour to the Bishop of Jerusalem; and Gregory VII. writing to Austin of England, exhorts him to form the English Church, according to what he found most worthy of imitation, either in the Church of France, of Germany, or of any other land. But now an appeal is made to the words of Christ addressed to Peter, which might as well be used to claim a supremacy in religious affairs for the convicts of New South Wales, as for the Cardinals and the Pope of Rome.

The faith of mankind is thus betrayed in every possible way. The Sacred Scriptures are dishonoured—corrupted—and withheld from the people. The traditions are forged in the very face of inspired authority. The sacraments are so corrupted, that the language of Sacred Scripture can no longer be used as descriptive of the Church of Rome—and the ministry is reduced beneath the degradation of ordinary contempt. Instead of the pure, and holy, and sublime arrangements of Christ, we have heaps of absurdities collected from the theatres and temples of heathen idolatry. Corruption has deluged the holy places of the Most High, and entered the innermost sanctuary. The deepest artifices are used on earth to prevent the conversion of men to God

while a mercenary outcry is raised for those who are in hell. It is all absurd. A mystery of crime, contrived with artifice too great for human ingenuity alone; and involving in its execution, a moral daring, which stands in the face of eternal vengeance, with a constancy that seems to exceed the resources of our fallen nature.

To illustrate this fact more perfectly, let me advert here, again, to what was briefly hinted at, in my Lecture on the Priesthood. There was, you know, during the wars of Charles V, of Germany, a soldier of noble descent, who broke his leg in the siege of Pampaluna. His name was Ignatius Loyola. He either did not like this rough treatment in his calling; or, from what he observed, concluded that war was not the most proper instrument for converting the heretics to his faith. He, therefore, gave himself to a religious life, preached with great zeal, and formed a new fraternity, which became, after some difficulty, confirmed by Pope Paul III. Apparently taking his idea from the example afforded in the Gospels, he and his followers made *the art of teaching* their instrument for converting the world to the Roman Catholic faith. Professing to imitate the example of Jesus, the Great Teacher, they were called Jesuites. To show the character of this system of Popery, and the blast of corruption, with which it stains everything that is good, you have only to mark carefully the change which has taken place in the meaning of this one word, with its derivatives. A Jesuit, which is the term for one of their order, now means a designing and crafty man; and Jesuitical, signifies, "designing, cunning, deceitful, prevaricating." Jesuitism, which described

their discipline, now means "cunning; deceit; hypocrisy; prevarication; deceptive practices to effect a purpose." Still the title has been adopted by none but their own fraternity. How then came this change to prevail? The answer is found in the history of their sect. This change in the meaning of these words, expresses the common judgment of mankind on their tactics, and policy. They have, with subtlety, gained an entrance into every nation upon earth: like the entozoa of humanity, they have penetrated their most secret functions; but in their growth, they have become, ultimately, unbearable; until nature itself rebelled against their tortures, and voided, and expelled them with disgust. Thus, they have recently received their just expulsion from the empire of Russia, having passed the limits of national toleration. Such, also, is their history in every land to which they have found access: and the change which has transpired in the meaning of these words, is, everywhere, sustained by the uniformity of their deception.

That which gives the greatest terror to this artifice, is its constant and universal individualization. The policy of Rome, is, in every land, what the character of its inhabitants may require for their subjugation. It yields to every form of government, and conforms to every kind of taste. It stands prepared to seize on every department of thought, of influence, and of feeling. In England, it is sweetened with pleas for toleration; and in Spain, it is as intolerant as the grave. In heathen countries, it leaves scarcely a line of demarcation between itself and the habits of the heathen; but here it labors

with incessant toil, to cover its absurdities with seeming conformity to Scripture truth. It adapts itself to individuals, as readily as to nations; and to this, in particular, their priests are trained. The fraternities of Rome, have, with one design, secured the advantage of a division of labour; and they conduct their departments with terrific skill. The Jesuit commands the literary sphere, corrupting the courses of history, and tinging its narratives with the colouring suited to his purpose. The Dominicans preside in the department of discipline and errors, and lead the proceedings of the inquisition. The mendicant orders, descended to the lowest grades of society, adapting their arts to the vulgar mind. Nothing is so high that they will not aspire to it: and there is no degradation to which they will not stoop. They are all things, to all men, if by any means, they may destroy some. Where they fail, they clamour with a sense of injury; but, where they succeed, the system they form lies like an incubus on the breast of prostrate nature, or preys, like the eagle of Prometheus, on the vitals of her peace.

A glance at the nations, now subject to the Roman yoke, will prove what I have said. For where shall we seek the protectors of our most unnatural slave-trade, but in Portugal? A Papal State. Civil war has no existence now, so barbarously brutal, as in the provinces of Spain. France had no obstacle to her liberties, so fatal, as the Roman priesthood. In Italy alone, has vice combined with elegance, and treachery, in her most hateful forms. Ireland has no calamity equal to that of her sensual habits, and her subjection to this creed.

The Canadas are wrung with its torments. The States are assailed by its inroads. The southern America, lies beneath its power like a paralysed giant possessed of all wealth, but bereft of all energy, because, through the malignity of this domination, bereft of the word of God. It appears in every nation, wearing the features of the master sin ; it is stedfast in its purpose, and simple in its aim, as if, with a dreadful fortitude, determined to exhaust the forbearance of heaven, and complete the catastrophe of man.

The cases that have come before me are full of interest, but I cannot do them justice now : they are some in America—others in Russia—some in town—others in the country ; some are the subjects of the delusion, while others have all the sympathies of nature, roused and embittered by the ruin of those they love. In every case, however, this has been the leading cause. The victims of this error have lived under the gospel ; but withheld their hearts from its claims ; and, by thus dishonouring God in the midst of gospel mercies, they have been left by God to abandon them. Their correspondence affords the strongest testimony of all that I have said. When I consider their state, for time, and for eternity ; my compassion is roused, beyond the power of language to express it. “ Oh, that they were wise, that they could understand this, that they would consider their latter end.”

But herein is verified the prediction of our Lord. “ I have come in my Father’s name (said the Redeemer,) and ye will not hear me ; but if another shall come in his own name, him ye will hear.” But though it

hath thus happened according to his word, we may not resign our hope; or withhold the effort to reclaim them from their terrible mistake. While they live, our prayers must be continued on their behalf, and our labor must be sustained for their good: and, if in these attempts, the picture I have presented be forbidding, let them remember, that it is the portrait of the system to which they have resigned their salvation and their peace; and let them not forget, that every feature I have pourtrayed, is copied from the highest authorities of their own Church.

In the history of this, our world, there are five great modifications of sin, which rose in co-ordination with each other. First—the blessings of Paradise were lost by the rebellion of Paradise. Then, the antideluvian sin was rebuked by the judgment of the flood. The patriarchs received their traditionary instructions, and these have resulted in the darkness and idolatry of the heathen tribes. When God had given a written law, a new kind of sin was committed, in its corruption: the dreadful vindication of which, has scattered round our doors, the Jewish tribes, who witness to the greatness of their sins. Now, in the perversion of this Gospel truth, a new advance is made; the disease has overpowered its remedy, and mercy is combined with justice in one common shame. What may be the fruits of sin hereafter, time only can unfold: but this, I pray, my brethren, that you, building your hopes on the rock of ages, may be kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation.

But there is one other feature which I am bound to notice. In no one of these deplorable cases, have those

whom we pity; plunged at once into the ruin we deplore. It was by most imperceptible changes in their feelings towards God, that the first parents of our race, came to the commission of their great offence. Through many ages, the antideluvian world was seen descending into the ruin of their deluge. The patriarchs passed by similar gradations to the guilty wretchedness, in which, through all the earth, their descendants are now presented to our view. For the beginning and continuance of their idolatries, the same specious apologies have ever been employed with those that abuse your ears. They never worshipped the stone, but used the stone as a medium of communication with God. And it is this which he condemns. Thus, too, the Jews descended to their wretchedness and guilt : the beginning of their folly seemed scarcely a departure from their law ; but, they diverged from its rules, until, by their traditions, the commandment of God was made of none effect. All sin, has ever passed, from beginnings that could scarcely be perceived, to ruins that nothing could repair. Such has been the progress of the errors in the Church of Rome. It required the discerning eye of an apostle, to detect the beginnings of this antichrist : and none but a soul filled with prophetic inspiration, could describe, from afar, the features to be developed by this man of sin. The simplicity of its infant being, gave no prognostication to the natural eye of those monstrosities which have ripened in its maturity. Such too, I beseech you to observe, will be its effects, and insidious advancements on individual minds. It invites you to decline a little from the truth : but, it will lead you to the grossness of error. It proposes to you another form of faith :

but, it will lead you into infidelity. It professes to administer the bread of life, in another form ; but, their bread is poison, and their way takes hold on death. When once the error has been imbibed, its victims seem infatuated ; as though made drunk with the wine of her fornications. Let not an unwise temerity, therefore, lead you within the snares of her allurements, but rather be ye sober, watching unto prayer. Learn to find your safety from this, and from every other sin, in constant communion with your God. Build up your faith on his oracles, and on his providential care in verifying all their declarations. Let the object of your faith be to realise Him always, and everywhere present with you, your reconciled God and Father in Christ Jesus : and, flee from this idolatry, yea, from the very shadow, and stain of it ; “ I speak as unto wise men—judge ye what I say.”

I have now finished the series of services announced in the original advertisement : and here, admonish you against the disingenuous publications that have been distributed through our assembly. I have now to add, that these exercises will be continued, so as to include the Canons of the Council of Trent, which relate to justification. It will then be seen, that the errors here defined, take hold on our most important interests ; both for this, and for the future world : and, if it should be found, that, a part of these errors have been imbibed by Protestant Churches, I assure you, that, this will be regarded, as no sufficient motive for withholding their exposure and reprehension.

And now may God, our Saviour, lead us into all the truth : and, by its observance, finally, to His heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

APPENDIX

SINCE these Lectures were delivered, I have seen the statistical statement of Catholicism in England, from Fraser's Magazine, which, I ought to have read before. All I can do now, is, simply to recommend its careful study, together with the Text Book of Popery, already mentioned. Fraser's Map is an excellent addition, it shows the putrid spots of our national disease, spread over the whole of our country. "In 1792, there were not in the whole of Great Britain, 30 Roman Catholic Chapels; there are now 513, of which 440 are in England—6 in Wales—and 67 in Scotland. There are 610 priests; of whom 531 are in England—5 in Wales—and 24 in Scotland. They are governed by 17 Vicars Apostolical—9 of whom are Bishops. In the year above mentioned, there was not one Roman Catholic College: there are now 10, besides 17 convents—6 seminaries of education—and many Chapel schools.

The Roman Catholic population of England, is now very little short of 3,000,000, and Ireland has 7,000,000.

It is said that London alone contains 30,000 Catholics. The Chelsea Chapel has a congregation of 6000. That of Somerstown, is increasing every day. The Bermondsey Chapel, of 9000. Stratford, of 3000. Tottenham, of 300 or 400.

The following will show what England has to expect from these instruments of Rome: It is quoted from their own Magazine. "*In fine, as models, in our day, of Episcopal heroism in the hour of trial, in France and in Germany, the Archbishops of Cologne and Paris, are presented to the hope and admiration of Europe.*"

May God be praised, they have thus thrown away their mask—and truth will be permitted to assail them in their real characters.

By searching these documents, my brethren, we shall be assisted to understand what Popery and its agents are *now*; and what we may expect from its further advancement.

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